THE One Good Way OF GOD:

CONTRARY

To the many different ways of Mens making.

WITH

Loving Warnings, Exhortations & Cautions, to all sorts of men concerning their souls, and to be at peace amongst themselves.

By One that truly loves them in and for God. ——— Known by the outward name, RICHARD HODDEN.

Gal.6.7. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap, &c.*

Ephes.6.11,12. *Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil: for we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

Ephes.4.14. *That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.*

LONDON

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BRITISH MUSEUM

To the
READER.

Friendly Reader,

I *Have here made mention of the Good Cauſe and Way of God in plain words, (according to the knowledge of his Son revealed in me) with much love to all men; that they might with their eyes ſee, and with their ears hear, the voice of the beloved Son of God; be converted, healed, and live unto him in righteouſneſs and true holineſs. And if thou be willing to know this one way for thine own ſoul, (with the true ſtate thereof) turn in thy mind to the pure light of the Lord Jeſus, to the word that is neer thee, in thy mouth and in thine heart; commune there, and be ſtill to obey it, that thou maiſt know thine own Teacher, learn thine own Leſſon, feel and find how thy ſoul proſpereth and travelleth in its journey towards the holy Land of heavenly Love, and bleſſed Reſt; to enter therein, and ceaſe from thy own works, as God did from his.*

And thus prepared, read on conſiderately with deep ſadneſs, great dread, love and meekneſs, that thou maiſt feel the love and favour therein, (not to get words, and thereby deceive thy ſoul) and ever mind the preſent ſtirrings in thy heart to love and long after the Lords knocking at thy door

for thee to open, that the King of glory may come in, and shew thee what his good pleasure is in thine own particular, for thy good, (without running into others Conditions to loose thine own strength) that thou must walk in obedience thereto, by the leading of his blessed spirit of holiness, (whatever others scoffingly may speak thereof) and so feel and find what adviseable part of the ensuing Treatise may concern thy present state; and therein wait, and abide faithful, until thou shalt hear the voice saying, Come up higher, and then follow it: for the eternal life (here but hinted at) is far from the roving wild mind, and unstable soul, and cannot be truely tasted, or sweetly savoured, so long as the soul remains ignorant of its self and true Teacher, or beholds any created things, and mingles with them; because Eternity is perfectly free from all similitudes, appearances, and perishing things, as being of and in the Father of lights, (with whom is no variableness, nor shadow of changing) whose pure presence so ravisheth the enlightned soul, that it desireth nothing but union with that light, and to know and do what that willeth in him; and therein seeketh to bring all others into the same heavenly frame and happy estate of endless joy and blessed love, (without hope of reward, or fear of punishment) wherein dependeth all the souls happiness, which no man ought to shun, neither indeed doth, but he that is wilfully blind, willingly ignorant of the love of God in Christ Jesus, (the true light;) and enemy to vertue, and the health and safety of his own soul, because this pure path is ready prepared, and ever open, waiting to embrace and conduct the soul that so cometh; and is such as wherein the pure mind finds the entrance easie, plain and pleasant, such as wherein the unlearned, (fools in the worlds esteem) and of mean capacities, cannot erre: but the worldly-wise, prudent and learned Clerks, may not (thereby) be acquainted

with

with it, it is so contrary to their wisdom; and the entrance, a strait gate to them; because therein their invented Arts, and earthly skill, have no place, (which they that trust to, shall one day know, and pay for their credulity) though otherwise commendable and useful in the managing of earthly matters. And herein is the great mercy of Almighty God manifested in Christ Jesus to sinners, (that have long neglected his love) that the poor, the blind, the lame, and all willing, watchful, and weary souls, (that truly love him in his least and lowest appearance) might come to him; and in his pure path of pleasure and light, see light, and finde refreshment, as those that have gone before in owning and witnessing his good old Cause in his way; as did righteous Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, *the Prophets, Christ Jesus himself, and his Disciples, (Martyrs and others) did, and still do, to obey him in all the leadings of his love in their souls, and feelings of his grace and spiritual favour; that they may know him more and better, and so grow up in him, and (by his spiritual nourishment pruning and purging, be fitted to bring forth more fruit in most humble and modest manner of obedience, according to the farther discoveries of his higher glory, and be therein exercised, that the purchased inheritance of the Saints in light, and crown thereof, may be in due time received.*

Thy Friend,

R. H.

The

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Peace
Humility
The Cross } in all.
Tenderness

The

The One Good Way of God,

Contrary to the many different Ways of Men's Making.

I Intend not here to say much (though something may be expected) of the Manner how, Matter whereof, or Time when the Lord God formed the first Man *Adam*, and breathed into him the breath of life, whereby he became a living soul; or how long he abode in that innocent life, of obedience, according to the abilities thereby given him, to converse with God, and give names to the other Creatures, according to their natures; how God made him a meet helper; how the Devil (as a subtil Serpent) prevailed with the woman, and both with *Adam*, to learn and strive to be kingly, potent, and skilful to reign, and rule over the Love and meekness of God, and by self-will to look out (with a lustful minde) after what was forbidden him, and to take content in the visible things of this Earthly Creation, and be ambitious and covetous thereof (wherein the devils Kingdom consists) for which the serpent was rejected, and also man cast out of Paradice, from the sweet presence of God, into this visible world, to take his portion (where his proud heart had chosen it) in the knowledge of good and evil, inventions and lusts, without and contrary to God; and how this begot in him an evil opinion of God, trouble of Mind and condemnation in himself; whereby sorrow of soul seised on him, love, meekness and humanity was lost, and he was dead unto God, and all good, but alive to every lust and fleshly delight, inwardly as a devil, and outwardly as a beast (by his so abusing his trust) insomuch, that he then esteemed God (who before was his life and delight) as his enemy, and became affraid of him, and could in no wise change his mind to love and trust God again, (though the Lord God changed not) but covered himself with outward things, as

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Fig-leaves, and hid himself from the presence of God amongst the trees, when he heard his voice there in the cool of the day: Or how *Adam* excused himself concerning his nakedness, his sin, or the prevalency of the temptation, by reason of his higher loose-mindedness: how he was driven out of the Garden, and Cherubims with a flaming sword set [illegible] to keep the way, and keep the way of the tree of life; or what was figured out thereby, concerning mans having his chosen portion in this world of his own self-love, self-wisdom, and earthly glory, by which sin entred, and death by sin came over all men, inasmuch as all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, by turning his truth into a lye, worshipping and serving the Creature instead of the Creator, (who is God over all, and rich unto all that call upon him) and so are become enemies in their minds through evil works, and to every good work reprobate, and no way to be recovered, but through the love and tender mercy of the Lord God, (so much abused) in the then promised seed, to bruise the Serpents head, destroy his sinful will and wisdom in mans mortal body, and restore him again to God, (from whom by transgression he fell) by turning his mind into the eternal counsel & will, and thereby bringing in an everlasting righteousness, in the new man, created in Christ Jesus, by the spirit of holiness, to good works, and walk in them, to the restauration of all things, *&c.* But of these things briefly, that I may be more large touching the end of mans Creation, and his duty in relation thereto, in which *Abel* offered an acceptable sacrifice, *Enoch* walked with God, pleased him, was translated, and not found (by any tentation) for God took him into the eternal heavenly hearing, seeing, tasting, feeling of love, and firm obedience, wherein the Lord GOD accepts every man that so comes unto him in Christ Jesus, (the same unchangeable way, truth and life) as babes and sucklings, and so receive his kingdom as little children, and (in the new spiritual birth, and by the sincere milk of the word) grow up in him, and become wholly his, and for him, in his eternal counsel and will, and have their conversations in heaven, hating the flesh, and drinking the blood of the Son of God, and partaking of his holiness, and glory, wherein the Tempter cannot find them, though he may contend as he did about the body of *Moses*. But though *Enoch* so walked with God, and after him, *Noah* was singular in his generation, yet (as it is written) *The wickedness of man was great in the earth, the imaginations and thoughts of his heart onely evil continually; for all flesh had corrupted their way; the earth was filled with violence: insomuch that the Lord repented that he had made man on the earth*: but man (by his Deed causing this) repented not to give glory to God, (in any general way) yet for all this, the Lords love and long suffering waited in the days of *Noah*, and afterwards suffered the evil manners of his people (the natural seed of *Abraham*) in the wilderness, and endured (as now he doth) the *vessels of wrath fitted for destruction*, (by unbelief, hardness of heart, and rebellion against him) that spend their times, and weary their wits, about eating, drinking, revelling, dancing

and

and serving their lusts of all kinds, with violence, in vicious living, as if that were the very end of mans Creation. The Lords love in tendering redemption, his outward chastisements, inward smitings, and suffering in his beloved servants, whereby he warneth all men to repentance, and calls to heed how they allow or plead for their sins, (as most do) saying, They must have their sins while their soules are in their bodies; or (as some speak) until their last gasp: but it were better said by such men, That they may, but will not, come to Christ to be led otherwise by his light and spirit of holiness, to be cleansed from all unrighteousness: were they but willing to follow him in his blessed footsteps before the Lord; jealousie and wrath be yet further kindled against them, that so wax old in their evil ways by custom therein, specially in these times of wrath, while he is working wonders in the earth, and delivering his chosen ones, avenging his elect, (that cry to him) executing the judgement written, as well for the rebellious, as for proving and purging his own houshold servants; or think the time not near when he shall say, *They are turned to their idols; let them alone. They that are filthy, let them be filthy still. Why should they be smitten any more? Let them go to the gods they have served. Give them their portion,* &c.

As ignorance is ever the mother of Devotion in erroneous principles, Opinions and Practises; so consequently it is of Divisions in those erroneous paths, whereby wilful ignorance is turned into Immodest Zeal, and hasty forwardness to make by-ways, with gaudy and guilded shews for others to fall down before, and worship: but my business being (here specially) to give some directions to weary Travellers that are going out of their way, and yet would know, and enter the door of mercy, and hope to find refreshment for their souls; and likewise to the rebellious, (that are in bondage) that the Lord God might dwell amongst them, and bring them also into his fold, and freedom of glorious liberty with the sons of God; and therefore briefly touch and pass over the many by-ways that lead to, and thorow Presumption into Despair, and thence into endless misery; as the way of *Cain, Nimrod*, the old world, *Jannes* and *Jambres, Ismael, Esau, Core* and his company, *Nadab* and *Abihu, Balaam*, and sundry other false Prophets, Apostates and Persecutors, as recorded in holy Scripture, over-many here to mention, and at this time too manifestly in use to be now hid.

III. The covetous prophane worldly men, in their several ways, chuse their portions in this world, their great desires, hopes, fears and cares; being to get, save and possess an earthly inheritance; which is their portion, and their heaven there also: some taking liberty (in the will of Satan and the flesh) to use (or rather abuse) the outward things given their own lusts) without any touch of Conscience, as being unwilling

to know what Conscience, and the light therein, means, lest it should hinder their earthly happiness of glorying in their shame, as men not in their right minds, but bereaved of their wits; not knowing what they are, of whom they are, to whom they belong, what their business is here, or how to gain content in anything, but every lust disquieting their minds, every filthy lust takes hold of them, and gets dominion over them, leads them captive; and they say they cannot help it: some adding, that if God had given them grace to forsake their evil ways, (as he hath done to some others) then they should be happy, and gladly leave their sinful courses; and, when God giveth them grace, they will, &c. Now to such I say, They speak truely, (but very wickedly) that they have no graces, and therefore must they still have, (though the grace of God hath appeared to all men) but they continue still in their filthy love, and delights in their lusts, and that because they disable themselves to receive grace, and neither wait to be prepared for the drawings of God in them, nor take any heed to his leading, or light that would shew them better, but resist all, so that they will have the very glimpse of the light of Christ, neither are willing to suffer it to rest in, or shine into, their souls, lest it should draw them from the great love and liking of this world, and the lusts that seem so sweet to them. But, Do they say they want grace to resist sin, and tentations thereto, that do presently yeild themselves to sin upon the motions thereof? These men have grace truely offered to them, but they withstand it, and turn it into wantonness, and resist the true light and holy Spirit when it moveth and striveth with them, (as sometime did the old world) whereby it becomes as natural to such men to commit sin, as the Ox to drink in water; and therefore think it impossible to withstand it; but it is by reason of their custom therein, and willingness thereto, which doth so weaken and enfeeble their wills and affections to grace, that they feel not the vertue thereof to resist the Devil, or sin, when he offers it to the soul; and when they do feel inward smitings in their Consciences, or as a heavy weight upon them, they presently (to quiet their Consciences) flee to their vain pleasures, and lustful practises; even as beasts and Sodomites, to eat and drink, and rise up to play; fill themselves with worldly solace, and leave tokens of their jollity behind them; from whence that general Question ariseth, *Do you love this man, or drink? this or the other outward thing? &c.* about which lusts, many do so mightily spend their strength, and employ their wits, in striving to get needless wealth, to satisfie this love, this lust, this god their bellies, (wherein they glory) which tends to their utter loss in spiritual things; and thus when they have over-much, unless they would employ it better, and also cast it off, and detract from their desires, inordinate affections, loves and likings that keep them from the love of God, sight and feeling of Gods grace, and way of edification to the heavenly mysteries of his glorious Kingdom; all bodily things being for support of bodily strength, (as physick for health) with much Caution; lest

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lust step in with the use: so could *Paul* beat down his body; and others following his example therein, as he followed Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father.

IV. O ye Formalists, that have (in these days) your ways in the fiery Element, without footing or foundation; that run any way with every wind, not knowing whither you go, because darkness hath blinded your eyes, and sloth so pestered your souls, that you are unfree and afraid to have your eyes opened in the light, lest it should prove to your loss in earthly things, and therefore do neglect the lightly and silent the voyce of Jesus Christ in your own souls, about Godliness. By your formal and dead performances of Conformity, and bodily exercise, what all are to perish with the nothing being (as it is written) *into the dust*, &c. From whence springs up the devilish snares and guile to catch the innocent, and Non-conformists, that are not of your fiery mind, without considering the commands of Christ Jesus, (the Lord of the harvest) who bids the tares and wheat grow together (in the world) until the harvest, as ranging in these words, *What is it to you, if I will you, if I will you any hurt?* or how he pleases graciously to carry on his great work of setting to reforming them, as to the spiritual sealing, neither yet how you your selves (or some of you) are but newly released from under the yoke of your bondage, and suddenly step up upon stage with the world, (to shew your selves for a little season) shaking off one wife by a (like, or greater) yoke of bondage upon the neck of others, that you your selves were able to bear: and especially in these transient times, when (as it is written) the holy God is *pouring contempt upon all flesh*; and these fading glories are vanishing away, made to be left by you, or snatcht from you before you have any firm hold of them: two dinners and seasons are all in the Lords hands, and his secret to his Saints: and therefore (in love to your souls) consider well your ways, and be not high-minded, but fear before the God of heaven; and learn of him to be wise in this your day of tryal, to understand what the good will of the Lord is respectively in you; and let not your hearts be misled by any stained prayer, praising, thanking, intercession in vain, for he knows every one of you, when you do not know what is in your own hearts, and therefore you might see what you are about, and sometime your souls to search his Scriptures, to mind what you pray to have in your souls, in earnest, in sincerity, and not hollow formalities, as the Pharisee did, in case you be found in their foot steps, contrary to his own good ways, which those that have truly found the [illegible] of Christ, [illegible] the reasonable service in [illegible] wilful, that [illegible] what that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God is, whereby he

forms mens souls through faith (as pleaseth him) into a perfect inward savour, taste, feeling, and wise skill, which the holy Ghost teacheth and giveth in the powers of the soul, whereby he requires no hard, harsh, or intricate service, but what is according to right reason, and the knowledge thereof to be received in his own light, and spiritual leading in every mans conscience, there to arise, and his enemies be scattered, as he is formed and renewed in the mind, according to his blessed will of heavenly love, and the contrary thereto is only unreasonable, unrighteous, intolerable and abominable to God, as that which enforceth men (of corrupt and unstable minds) to formalities and hypocrisie, whereof his soul is condemnation in themselves, to their souls besides the many other hellish, and miserie to mankinde, for what is out of faith, is sin, both in the commander and actor, and the least sentence God is grieved with, and he that condemns not himself in the thing that he allowes, and continually which ought to be well heeded, and warily observed by all men, and is by those that are willing to know and perform the great trust reposed in them concerning their own souls, as knowing that they must give an account of themselves to God, and ought not to rest their souls with others, that have other ends then for the Lords service, and learned Arts, whereby to call good evil, and evil good, put darkness for light, and light for darkness, as blind men, or with their eyes shut, and unwilling to know the light of life, and leading of the holy Spirit of truth, as if (as the fool said in his heart) there were no God: or not desiring the knowledge of his way, and yet concerning the things of this world, cry, Give, give, more, more; when they have not rightly learned how to use that they have.

You that are strict and zealous Professors in your ways, should study to be zealous in your selves, and with others; you have a zeal as for God, but not according to knowledge of him, (as a fire of love in you kindled by the holy Ghost) and therefore you are such, and so diversly opinionated, and so many sects do arise amongst your selves, but one for contending for the Manner, another for their prayers made, Faith a third for their dead, dumb, and empty ordinances, and each impleading, censuring and troubling your selves (like [illegible] and others, as Cain had his envy against Abel, and persecuted him, because his Lord was pleased with his sacrifice, and not with his) and so in the light of Christ Jesus the holy Spirit which leads into all truth, as [illegible] sometime [illegible] and you hope and trust [illegible] and [illegible] and [illegible] and

and wasts all sin out of obedient souls, with the fleshly loves and lovers thereof; so as there may be no more mis-judging by private and perverse spirits of ignorance, weakness, or thick darkness, that cannot comprehend the deep things of God, but do turn the minds out of the true light of Jesus Christ, (wherein his servants see light to walk that pure path of holiness in him) to glory in words, emptiness and vanity of your wills, bodily wits, and works; (as did the former persecuters of Christ Jesus) not wisely heeding the Lords hand, whereby he is restoring all things into the glorious liberty of his sons and daughters, and how he therefore now shakes the earth and heavens also; which should abate the edge of mens earthly appetites, (accompanied with such strange and hideous effects) and would, if they knew any thing of the Lords pure and powerful workings, or of the times and seasons, or were but near ripe for truth, and ripe to the kingdom of God; and would take such off from expecting greater signes and wonders, or acting another thing by another spirit of private interpretation, (different from the Lords purpose so many ways manifested;) and therefore it is evident that such men are sick, weak, or fallen asleep; so that they cannot discern the Lords body, his truth, and true worshippers, nor other things that differ. ——— And though you may not be competent Judges in spiritual matters, yet consider, is it righteous or reasonable, that those who are either meerly carnal, or have not yet received so much as the bare presence of the holy Spirit in grace, should judge others that are sealed with the Spirit of promise, baptised and made to drink into that one Spirit which judgeth all things, and so are partakers of the divine nature of the inimortal and invisible God? Have you never read how the Lords praise is perfected in the mouths of his babes and sucklings? and that whosoever doth not receive the kingdom of God as a little Childe, shall in no wise enter therein? or how the mysteries of that kingdom are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed to such babes? or how the halt, lame and blind, (whom you despise) do enter, while you your selves and others are shut out, and the rich sent empty away? Remember that Exhortation of Christ Jesus (domen of your sort) saying, *Wash the inside, that the out may be clean also.* It is high time for you to be willing to put away the evil of your doings, and yeild to his light, and leading of his Spirit, that your souls may be prepared and fitted to feel and know him as *God equal with the Father*, (spiritually) to cleanse you from all unrighteousness; and then you will not suppose that any good thing of him can make you happy, but what is so revealed, and wrought in you, or be ignorant of the danger of resisting or neglecting such divine stirrings in your souls, by any your exquisite Arts, natural Reasons, or bodily Wits, as some do, who are so much thereby deceived, that they think they are not deceived. You may read likewise of some that had travelled pretty far in outward Ordinances, been baptised with water, &c. and yet not heard that there is an holy Ghost, and such in these days, are not a few, that have their ears stopped with dumb and deadly sounds

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of words, or thereby become so dull of hearing, that they hearken not to the *voice of the Charmer, though he charm never so wisely*; nor are gotten one step further then those that had not heard of an holy Ghost, (though they can talk much of him by what they have read, or others told them:) and, *how then should they believe on him of whom they have not heard?* specially while they are so willingly led by such ignorant talkers, that so dulls them, and hinders their heeding of the true light, and hearing what the holy Spirit saith, and how he revealeth the deep things of God to all watchful and willing souls; so that such have their loves to, and their faith and lives in, mans wisdom, and seldom (or never) come to the love of God, indeed and in truth, but remain vain and unruly talkers and contenders about words, questions, and outward things, and would make themselves love God by their own strength and wisdom; which may not be, though they should act therein never so violently, as it were to pull God out of heaven to them by their strivings, pantings and burstings out into heat in their devoted zeal: for though such suppose in their thoughts and hearts they love God, and also resolve so to do, and for his sake to suffer death; yet these mans love (in that manner) is neither truely so, nor is any strength so asked by them to build therein; for such souls have but either received that gift of love through Christ as a man, or they have it not, but would have it; and so strive in their own strength to feel the love of God, but come not to a waiting in the light to see and know their own souls, nor themselves unworthy and unable to do any good thing, think a good thought, or in the least measure to move towards God, or prepare their own hearts for him; or see their own miserable, blind and naked condition, as dead in sins and trespasses, waiting at the Pool to receive help and healing by the Angels moving of the water, as the Lords free gift of love to eternal life; which is the way for them to come to the sight of Jesus Christ, as being all to them, and working all in them; and therefore not to strive outwardly, but quietly wait, and ask nothing but the gifts of love, that they might be touched and taught of him, to see God by his blessed light, and gracious presence; and then love him by his own gift of love so received through patient suffering, as wrought in their souls by the holy Ghost, without bodily strength, or earthly skill; these being the means whereby souls are made so meek and obedient, that they work not of themselves at all by bodily wit or exercise, but freely suffer the holy Ghost to will and to do in them, and with them, as best pleaseth him, for the working of their souls into faith and feeling of his love by degrees, without outward noise or strivings about it; for Christs voice was not heard in the street, it is a soft and still voice to be heard in silence, and felt of all the senses and powers of the soul, and is very sweet to all savoury minded that have waited for him, and they that so wait long, and cover after the fruits of the Spirit, and love therein, shall surely encrease therein, more as this is not by bodily exercise, so is easy to be by resting in spiritual exercise, already done, and *pressing forward toward the mark*

of

of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; and ever following that they feel, to grow therein towards perfection; for otherwise there will be a sudden sealing upon the old Lees, and so a declining to loss, and the end without profit or comfort: as some Apostates who have said they have gone round, back again, &c. and so lost not onely their hold of perfection, but their first love, and leading principle of God in them; for there is first a beginning with rude souls, and a change of the mind in the working of faith; and then faith worketh by love, and after that by the more strong, clear and pure stirrings (as felt in all active souls) towards that life of perfect love: for though the body of sin be at first seen in the light, then debased, and in some suddenly crucified; yet it will be seen, felt, and laboured in, and against, until full victory be obtained: as the beloved *Paul* said, by his *rejoycing in Christ Jesus*, *he died daily*; whereby the old feeling of the body of sin comes to be destroyed, and the soul brought into a new gracious feeling by the operation of the holy Spirit, to grow up in him who is the head of all principalities and powers.

VI. These things being so, it highly concerns every man (respectively) to weigh, and warily consider his own way, station and standing, and to prize the time and abilities that the Lords love in Christ Jesus hath allotted him, to wait and watch for his conversion, reconciliation and salvation, and to account the time (misspent and irrecoverably past) sufficient to have done the will of the flesh, in thinking his own thoughts, speaking his own words, and acting contrary to the eternal counsel and will; and that the present time is onely mans to make his use of, (not knowing what shall be to morrow) and the loss of what is past, will be his greatest grief, as his ignorant soul comes to see it self, its sins and duty; or otherwise (as Christ said of *Judas*) *better to him he had never been born*: Whereof I onely query, (as the beloved *Peter*) What shall the end be, of those that obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ; but take pleasure in unrighteousness, and mind not the Lords love in drawing them, or their duties in a willing yeilding, and suitable subjection thereto? For great was the love of the Lord God in creating man after his own image and likeness, with a soul fair, clean, and fit for his service and glory; and yet greater (when man had proudly departed from that holy and happy condition, and made himself unfree and unfit to embrace that love, and serve that end) in commending, promising and stirring forth his love again in his own onely Son, to restore man, and bring him back into God, (from whom he so wilfully and wickedly departed by the enticement of the Devil) and thereby to free him from the snares thereof, and pains due thereunto; and yet his especial and greatest love, is to be sold, trifled, and sweetly savoured in his free cleansing of mans soul by the gift of the holy Ghost, whereby it becomes to be conformed to the likeness of his dear Son; by which

love,

love, he giveth of his Godhead to every obedient and clean soul, (that comes to will and to do of his good pleasure) as a fit vessel and temple for the holy Ghost to dwell in, and walk in: which all his sons and daughters (that are heirs of this salvation:) do right well know, and therein are made willing and obedient, ready and diligent to help all others (what they may) to come to the same happy condition of blessed love and heavenly sweetness, that all things may be restored to their first and primitive purity, and the great mercy and love of the Lord seen to, and felt by all his creatures; for whom he taketh care in their respective kinds, feeding the Ravens, clothing the Lilies, and much more the obedient soul that is of his own breath, and waits upon him by his Spirit, being plain and simple in the truth, and willing to do all things in the eternal will, ever waiting to live always in his light of love by every word that proceeds out of his mouth, until he be swallowed up of the divine will, and inexpressible goodness and wisdom; and so settled in his rest, (with a sober and chaste mind) as to be preserved from touching any thing that defiles, or wherein the soul feels not the pure love, meek motion, and heavenly life of Jesus Christ above all outward appearances, likenesses or forms of words; and as it is contrary to, and envyed of, all natural selfishness.

VII. In the next place, truely to know this one Lord Jesus Christ come in the flesh, as the new and living way to the Father, the *Immanuel, (God with us)* making the atonement by the blood of his Cross, to have all things subject unto him, his servants in him, and he in them; which is the great mysterie of godliness, hid from Ages and Generations, until the fulness of time, and then *manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, believed on in the world, and received up into glory*; which none of the wise men of this world ever knew, or can know by all their learned skill of earthly wisdom; nor any man that lives after the flesh, or satisfieth himself with hearing, reading, telling, or talking of him, or concerning what he or his Apostles did, said, or suffered; as those that vainly take his Name into their mouths, (on most occasions of their invented ways) but know him not; neither by his divine Nature nor Name, nor how God and man became one Christ Jesus, how that which may be known of God is manifest in man, how he is the *wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The Prince of peace: The Author and Finisher of our faith*: how he saves his people from their sins, is the Reconciler without imputation of sin: how he is formed in his servants, and cleanseth them by his blood from all sin and unrighteousness: how they take up the cross and follow him, or what the cross is; how the body becomes dead because of sin, and the spirit alive for righteousness sake; how they are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones: how he is their *Leader, and Captain of salvation, made perfect through sufferings*: how they are baptised into his death, and saved by his life: how the Union

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is perfected in all the parts and members of his body the Church; what the Church is, or how his Body; or what it is to eat his flesh, and drink his blood; without which (as himself said) we have no life in us: how *every knee shall bow to him, of things in heaven, in earth, and under the earth; and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father*: how he is that *blessed and only Potentate, King of kings, and Lord of lords: The head of all thrones and dominions, and every name that is named*, &c. And therefore (not knowing him) cannot worship him accordingly. Neither are such willing to become obedient to him in his light that maketh all things manifest, naked and bare; whereby he brings every secret thing to light, and passeth judgement upon the transgressing nature, and bruiseth the branches of it with every lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life; (that are not of the Father, but of the world) nor to know him the *Healer and Maker up of the breach, the Repairer of the ancient path to walk in*; by cleansing mens souls, that are full filthy, while they remain ignorant of him, or have any fleshly appetite, lust, or like desire alive in them, whereby the fair pearl is blemished; and much more filthy, when their souls are taken up with a full love and liking of this world, and wholly overcome by the sensual and fleshly part, that they chuse it, and delight therein as the full rest of their hearts; so that they feel no liquor of life, or sweetness of grace stirring them to loath what their flesh liketh; nor to desire that heavenly food of their souls: so they do not bear the image of sin, but are born, and carryed with it, and of it, and feel no strength but in it, nor no will to leave it, but yeild thereto with all ready forwardness.—— But Jesus Christ is the food of all hungry souls; and through him, in him, and by him, are such souls reformed and restored into their first and fair likeness of God, in righteousness and true holiness; and so is the new man created in Christ Jesus to good works to walk in them by the Divine will and quickning Spirit; whereby the flaming sword comes to be removed, and the everlasting gate opened to all willing and watchful souls to enter therein into the heavenly and endless life, where Jesus Christ is the Door, the Porter and Receiver, always waiting ready to imbrace the souls that so watch, pray, walk and attend to be (here in this life) reformed by his Spirit into his likeness and love, to live by the words of his mouth, as swallowed up of the Divine will of inexpressible sweetness, and so walk in the Spirit of love and meekness, with sober and chaste minds, as the Lords seed seen, without handling or touching any unclean thing that defiles, or wherein their souls feel not the pure love, meek motion, and holy life of Jesus Christ above all shadows, types, figures, forms, or fleshly things, &c. There be many that think they love Jesus Christ, and know him, to whom he may truly say, *I know you not; depart from me, ye are workers of iniquity.*—— Though they may have amassed to a fleshly knowledge of him, by imagining, thinking, and fashioning him in themselves, (with their minds, thoughts, affections, desires, cares, and bodily wits) and so suppose they

 love,

love, fear, serve and worship him as a man like themselves (yet such
out sins) that God is wroth with them as a man that is offended: that
Christ died for their sins, and therefore they fall down at his feet with
sorrow of heart, crying for mercy and pardon; and (like the five foo-
lish Virgins) suppose they are ready for him, have good oyle in their
eye, and do reverence him, and fear before him; and do weapon do
verily believe they do know and worship him, because they feel their
hearts moved and stirred with love to him, and desire of him. But
this is not the worship in spirit and truth, which he expects, and ac-
cepts; for all this while these worshippers know not their own souls,
nor God in Christ Jesus reconciling them to himself: so have they
any Out in their hands, or inner lineaments of life shaping their souls; for
the Lord Jesus is not seen, much lesse known and worshipped by mens
imaginations; for the earthly nature cannot receive, retain, or bear
this heavenly new wine. So there was a time when Christ Jesus told
his Disciples he had *many things to say unto them, but they could not then
bear them*; and yet being upright in hearts to the Lord, he is pleased to
to temper, strengthen and comfort them with such an inward behold-
ing, that they forsake not, and the great love of this world, whereby the
invisible light of his Godhead is somewhat shadowed to the inner eye of
their souls, under the bodily likeness of Christs fleshly holiness, and
may be in so great love, that it layeth all wicked love in their souls,
and strengthens them to suffer deeply for him; and yet this is not the
dawning of their souls, whereby they see and find the great love of
the world, is only as a shadow of the inward light and love of the Godhead
and manhood united, and lightly touching the outside and de your soul;
wherefore the Prophet saith, as being under the shadow of his spiritual
wings, (or manhood) and so this is how Christs love received into
mens dark minds and imaginations, that is but a shadow of the
unto thousands (preaching Christ only) have not yet attained, though
they preach much from scripture, and also [illegible] and
and spiritual teaching of Jesus Christ with much [illegible]
whereby the soul comes to understand his spiritual love to the God-
head. As Christ said, [illegible] in one, &c. to which all shall be brought, as but as mens
mens minds for the light, and [illegible]
ration of the wonderful love [illegible]
fected in the manner of Christ [illegible]
this love is [illegible]
hearty affections; but [illegible]
braced him with more [illegible]
Mary Magdalen loved Christ [illegible]
her love was much [illegible]
as God perceived [illegible]
in which affections [illegible]
her not in that [illegible]

death,

teach, and appeared unto her, she would have reverenced him with such a manner of love as she did before, and then Christ forbad her, saying, touch me not; as, look not on me with a fleshly eye to rest therein, for so I am not ascended to my Father, nor equal to the Father so; but now, love me as I am one with the Father, in the form of the Godhead; know, love and worship me as God, and man like God, so to be with me; love and worship me onely for that I am God, that took the nature of man; and therefore receive and embrace me as God in thine heart, and in thy love of me, and worship me in the enlightned understanding of thy soul, as Jesus Christ, God and man; the saving truth, goodness, and light of blessed life, and spiritual joy; and so Christ Jesus promised to come unto his Disciples, and be with them by his holy Spirit, (after given them) with power from on high to teach them all things, and lead them into all truth; the which heavenly gift of holiness and glory, few have yet attained to in these latter times, since the Apostacy: and therefore those souls (that have not attained to this spiritual understanding of him through his grace) are to wait in his light, with pure affections of fervent love, until more grace be freely given unto them, and not to over-run the conditions wherein they are, but stay therein until they shall respectively feel a better revealed in them; still minding, that all spiritual gifts are felt and tasted in the powers of the souls; chiefly, in love and spiritual understanding, but not in imaginations through the strength of the body, or bodily wits, which are not spiritual feelings, and are most but outward tokens of spiritual inward feelings in the powers of their souls, where the holy Ghost hath lighted their reasons, and kindled their affections with his blessed Presence so clearly in fervent love, that they immediately thereby received the knowledge of spiritual truth, and perfect love, with an outward shewing of the inward feeling of spiritual grace. ——— And as it was in the former Disciples, so it is now in other like-perfect souls, visited and lighted within by the holy Ghost, whereby there is an outward feeling of the inward grace, and the body made obedient (thereby) to the Spirits moving and leading; without fainedness or fancie of imagination. ——— And he is no spiritual man that hath not thus learned Christ, or is taught his lesson by him in like spiritual wise; nor any way qualified to judge of spiritual matters, but must consequently erre in his understanding, and mar all he meddles with; and not know how, or wherein he so erreth, much less how to amend his own errours; and how then shall he reform others, but as a blind man may judge of colours, because these spiritual things are above the sight of his carnal eye, so that he perceiveth them not that hath not the spiritual eye of his understanding opened? and how then should he open the Scriptures, that (as Christ said) neither knows them, nor the power of God, or be skilful in the use of his spiritual Weapons, his warfare or work to be done in his Vineyard, or know the kingdom, power or glory of God, whereto all true service tends? For, (as it is written) *The natural man understands not*

the things of the Spirit of *God*: but they are foolishness to him, for he is the spiritual man that judgeth all things, and is judged of no man, because his life is hid with God in Christ, as taken from the earth, and unknown to the world, but well known to God; and is so refashioned in soul, that he feels the least fleshly stirring in him, and condemns it, and loaths it in his heart, and ever fleeth to God for strength against all such motions; and loves not his life to attain the life eternal, but is passive in every thing; a man of sorrows and sufferings, as his Lord Jesus was, and left him an ensample to follow him therein.

Seeing the business in hand is of soul-concernment, it is absolutely necessary, that the soul should know it self, with the faculties, vertues and powers thereof, by its turning into, and watchful keeping in its pure principle of the light of Christ Jesus in the Conscience, to love that light, and observe its motions as it shall be led by the holy Spirit into all truth, and thereby restored into its primitive purity, fit to enjoy the sweet presence of God, as *Adam* did before his disobedience.——For a miserable and wretched man is he that knoweth not the workings, worth and worthiness of his own soul, (the first lesson to be learned in Christs school, as the trade of his youth) is being the most excellent Creature that the Lord God formed for his service and glory, (whereto nothing can give true content, satisfaction or rest, but God onely; and therefore neither to love nor desire any thing but him) for otherwise he cannot come to know the Spirit of God, and what it willeth, worketh, or would work in him; how it striveth, how it is grieved, how quenched, how he searcheth all things, (*even the deep things of God:*) how he dwelleth in man, how he witnesseth with mans spirit, or how he baptiseth into the one body, how the excellent mysteries of divine love are revealed (to the obedient and clean soul) by the holy Ghost; or how so to live and walk in the Spirit, as not to fulfil the lusts of the flesh. This living soul is not any corporeal substance, but a life invisible, (as God is invisible) for it is of the breath of God, and so is Gods, (in an especial manner) that by its vertue beareth up the body, and quickneth it, and so the Spirit formed in man is said to be the *candle of the Lord*, useful there in searching the inner parts, and knowing the hearts secrets. This soul consisteth of reason, mind, will and other faculties, fit to receive and retain God in its understanding and knowledge, without forgetting him, or being distracted by any Creature, or creaturely thing; and as the Reason is enlightned, and becomes clear, and bright, (free from errour and darkness) and the will and affections turned into the light and love of Christ Jesus, (the promised seed, and endless wisdom of God) and is free from all beastly love of the flesh, or any Creature, by his blessed love, meer mercy, and soveraign goodness of his holy Spirit.——The soul becomes as *Adams* was in Paradise, an innocent life of conversing with God; and as *Enoch*, that

that walked with God, pleased him, and was not found, &c. But this soul cannot be found or known while man hath any thing molesting it that is of his own body, or bodily wits, wherewith the senses may be exercised, (*for he that will save his life, must loose it*) for the reasonable soul is a life immortal as well as invisible, and hath a power and pure light of Christ in it self, to see, know and love the truth, and true good, which is God onely; and he that truely feels and knows this, and is sensible of the touches thereof, feels and knows somewhat of the reasonable soul, and the kindly workings of it; and the more he becomes acquainted therewith, (in this manner) the better he seeth and knoweth himself, and others also; and the more meek, humble, lowly, loving, tender and compassionate will he be towards all men and creatures.—— And this was the high estate and condition, the heavenly and excellent dignity that *Adam* lost when he became in love with himself, and selfish things, taking delight in earthly knowledge and worldly glory, whereby he fell into a dark, feeble and wretched estate, like the beast that perisheth; by which the love that before was clean, savory and sweet in the holy Ghost, was so turned into a filthy beastly love and liking of himself and the creatures, wherein he sought content, but found it not, (as it now is with all that remain in that degenerated nature;) and therefore the soul, to be brought back to know it self, and be fitted for the service whereunto it was ordained, by its being gathered up into its self, and fully departed from beholding all creaturely things, or selfish use of bodily wits, arts, wisdom or knowledge of man, (gotten by any natural means, study, labour, or exercise) so that the soul feel it self in its own kind, in being as it were without a body; for as the eye of the soul is opened to Jesus Christ in his pure light, and the love turned to him, it is received up above all bodily creatures, from beholding, liking, drinking on, and using them; and ever disdaining to be obedient to any worldly thought, or earthly thing, (that perisheth with the using) And while the soul is so kept, therein cometh no errour, nor deceit of its enemy, because it then seeth Jesus Christ above and in him, and holds the mystery of faith in a pure conscience, and all created things below under his feet, as not in him, nor of him. So *David* waited upon God for salvation, and his heart hearkned and indited of that good matter, and so became very ready in it, and saw the beauty of the Lord; and when the soul is brought into this heavenly harmony, it truly loves God, and all creatures spiritually, (not fleshly and carnally as in its former ignorance) and is overcome with the sweetness of Christs words of love, clearly revealed and spoken into the ear of the heart; which that soul heareth and obeyeth with good savour, and true joy in him alone; and so *his secrets are with his saints*; but not with the blind world; for the ignorant soul is so over-laid with worldly love, that it is all common as the high-way, so that every stirring of the flesh and the Devil finketh into it, resteth therein, and passeth through it as it pleaseth without controule; and so if any good seed fall therein, it withereth

withereth for want of earth, it is choaked, or these fowls of the air steal it away, and devour it; there being onely the degenerate nature of old *Adam*, while that which became a living soul wanteth the quickning spirit to form the new man, settle and establish the soul, not according to the carnal commandment, but after the power of the endless life. But how hard and difficult this is for the rude soul so unacquainted with it self, and accustomed to receive tentations, make provision for the flesh, and fulfil its lusts, and be stirring much in filth and fleshly things, to enter this strait gate to the knowledge of its self, in its true light, is evident by the ignorance of most, and the small numbers of those that find it; for most men that would finde entrance, and know their souls, (in stead of turning in, into the light of Christ) turn their thoughts with imaginations into their bodies, to seek for their souls, and to feel them; as though they were hid within their hearts, as their hearts are holden and hid within their bodies. Now if a man should covet to know his soul, and that never so earnestly, and seek for it in that manner in his body, he may not possibly so find it in its self, but the more he seeketh to feel and know it by studiousness, (as he would know or learn tongues, arts, or other bodily things) the farther shall he be from it by that seeking; and therefore so many weary themselves in vain, by seeking the door in a wrong way, and contrary nature, whereby it is hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed onely to babes and sucklings at the breasts of consolation to the pure light of Christ, who is this Door, and by whom the diligent soul comes truely and quickly to enter, understand and know what its self is with its true Teacher and Guide, while the other soul falleth suddenly into imaginations of bodily things and words, supposing thereby to have or gain the light of its self, and so of God, and spiritual things; which (as I said before) can never be so attained, (by imagination or bodily wit) as the mind may see sensibly what is just between man and man by its understanding thereof; for then the soul might see it self in understanding reasonable things. But the soul is to seek for a higher knowledge of, and in it self, in the light, as to know that it is invisible and immortal, of the breath of God, wherein God is to be seen spiritually, which is a great mystery, not to be expresst in words, but to be sought out, and kept clean and bright from worldly wisdom, fleshly filth, and earthly vanities, above the sensual part, to see it self in Jesus Christ, the Way, Truth and Life; the ancient Path wherein the holy men of God ever walked to please him in diligent labour and travel of mind, and sufferings of the outward man, and yet with fulness of joy and spiritual delight.

In every spiritual work and employment, mans will, wisdom, reasoning and earthly affections, are to be left behind, as *Abraham* left his servants when he went to offer his Son *Isaac* for a burnt-offering to the Lord; and as *Moses* drawing near to God put off his shoes, so all you

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that will draw near unto the Lord God, cast aside, and leave behind you, your own selfishness, wills, wisdoms, and imaginations, with every high thought that exalteth it self, and keeps your souls from closing with the Lord in his holy service, that you may be by him prepared to meditate, watch, pray, and give thanks in all things, and at all times, and embrace all divine counsel and heavenly help thereby, freely tendered in the pure light and tender touches in the conscience, to move the heart into an awful dread, and true fear of God, that by the stirrings of grace you may come to a knowledge of him spiritually; which gift is common to all, but particularly received by the diligent soul that waits therein stable and firm, according as it so receiveth, and keepeth thereto with all ready chearfulness, moving in its own measure of grace so given; (though it be never so little) for the Lord is pleased suddenly to prepare mens hearts by putting meditations into their minds in the beginning and time of their conversions; especially of such as have been much occupied in worldly defilements; and then commonly the thoughts of such (when once turned in) are most upon their sins, with great sorrow, meekness and tears, asking forgiveness, and watching thereto, as the Lord toucheth their souls sharply to make them the sooner clean; for then the sin will be ever in the sight as foul and horrible, and accompanied with fightings and hard conflicts in their consciences, so as that they can take no rest (until the Lord Jesus give it as pleaseth him) wherein is his tender mercy, that he may come and cleanse such souls the more speedily, and forgive their sins as he washeth them away, (wherein justification is in sanctification, and sanctification accompanied with justification) and sitteth the soul to receive some spiritual grace and gift of his love; and so the holy Spirit ofttimes stirreth to meditations in God, which worketh a kindly work in their souls to be waited in, and the fruits of the Spirit to be received, and all in Jesus Christ, as the pure power, endless love and wisdom of God that sets the heart upon hungering after his vertue and spiritual discoveries, in such excellencies as God is graciously pleased to give in to the soul; and so meditation, watching and praying have no rules, bounds or limits set by man unto them, but when and as the Lord Jesus pleaseth to give by the holy Spirit, for his gift it is, for disposing of his chosen ones, and drawing in their souls to him, to be made wise in waiting, knowing and obeying him spiritually; wherein he giveth such tender-heartedness, that they ofttimes pour devotion, and are ravished in souls above measure; somewhat like as it sometimes was with the Disciples that were together, and were filled with the holy Ghost, and then spake forth the great and wonderful things of God, when all they knew was by that spiritual ravishing love; and so the Lord is pleased ofttimes to open his treasury, and give to some very plentifully in all ages, as their souls come to be cleansed, and the way made open and easie to them, though the doing thereof is a great mystery to others that remain ignorant, or are not watchful and diligent; so that it passeth over them, (some growing

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contrary to it, and at enmity with it) for then the Lord withdraweth it again by reason of that slothfulness and abuse, and sometimes layeth more diligent, to prove and try such, that they may know wherein their strength standeth, and after that to feel their own weakness, and also know their respective places, and how to love more spiritually; and so partly it was with the Disciples that loved Christ much while as he was with them, but then fleshly as in his manhood; and therefore he told them it was necessary for them that he should go away, and send the holy Ghost to teach them, to know and love more spiritually; and so the Lord oft withdraws himself outwardly, that the inward and heavenly presence of his love may be the more earnestly desired, meditated on, and pressed after; and that the soul may know its duty and employment in waiting, watching and suffering, until it be throughly renewed, strengthened and established in his spiritual might and power, to glorifie him with more fervent love and holy worship: and if it so come to pass that he who is watchful and diligent therein, feels not this vertue enabling him to meditation, or spiritual imployment with his whole heart, (as he desireth) but in stead thereof, feeleth many other thoughts run in upon him, and hinder him; and the more pain he taketh to keep his heart in watching and waiting for spiritual feeling, the farther off it is to the very last, and again harder afterwards: this is to teach him to watch more singly and sincerely within the soul, and forget all things without; and to know that it is no easie thing to love with all the heart, until the heart be renewed; for this work will be found painful and laborious at first by the pressing in of vain thoughts; and a full hard task it is for him that feels no grace, to be long meditating, waiting and watching in his soul; and much will he be encumbered with running and roving thoughts, as having gotten no sure hold of his heart; and therefore is the heart to be kept unto God (in the light) with all diligence, for thereout come the issues of life or of death; for there is the good or the evil treasure; and when well kept, there springs up wise and clear thoughts, clean affections, fiery desires to spiritual employment, vertue and vertuous actions: but otherwise thereout come the contrary, as evil thoughts, unclean desires and affections; for every mans thoughts and meditations discover to him (that is of a heedful mind) what he is; as that whereon he thinketh and meditateth in, that he loveth, for that he loveth is his God; and the more he loveth God, the more he guideth him, and medimeeth on him, and his motions, and the more is the soul alive, and active to him, accounting it a shame to be fed with swines meat of fleshly things and savours, wherein he feels no spiritual refreshment, or true joy of love and delight.——And therefore he never sets his heart and mind spiritually upon good, meditates on him, to know what he willeth, and to please him, see him, know him, have, love and enjoy him by his grace, and by degrees more and fewer; and as the soul ever keeps to these desires, it will be shewed plainly, (in the light) what is evil, and what good; what is pleasing to God, and what

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is contrary to him, and teach him all needfull things for salvation, gain them for him, and bestow them on him: and therefore as there is a standing fast in this watchfull desire, victory will be given, so that the soul wait and meditate meekly and patiently until Jesus Christ accept thereof, give spiritual savour, and accomplish his own work therein with victory (as no other saints) in his own time, and so as it may become that souls chiefest joy to know and do that heavenly will, because of the true spiritual delight therein. ——— But if man should comply, and strive with his bodily wits and worldly wisdom, that will but drive him farther off: ——— and a wretched thing it is for any man to leave the inward watch and keeping of his heart, and shape to himself any outward form, figure, likeness or habit of vertue and holiness in meditation, prayer, or other performance, to live in such a form of outward exercise, beholding, joyning with, or imitating others, and supposing himself right and righteous in so doing; for thereby he departeth from the light, guidance and government of Gods blessed Spirit, and deceiveth himself by thinking he hath acceptance with God in his own doings; which so done, are directly against God, though they might be right and acceptable in those that were led thereto by the Spirit of God.

In this general calling of souls employment, nothing is rightly done but in watching and prayer; nor any true watch kept, or prayer presented, but in the light, and with a spiritual understanding, wherein vertue, wisdom and strength comes to be received and rightly employed: but this consists not in learning to say words, or know how many parts prayer hath, or how to word it wisely for the drawing of others affections, and so to *make long prayers for pretence*, or as *to be heard for much speaking* in the way that mans wisdom teacheth of bodily exercise, (as did the Pharisees, whereof Christ warned his Disciples) and lifting up themselves in their own strength for the applause of men, that they may be reputed able Christians, of excellent parts, full of knowledge, better then others, *&c.* By which means many are themselves deceived, by thinking they have the grace of Christ, and spiritual knowledge, and thereupon do so worship and please themselves in their hearts, as if they were the onely men to pray, praise, and give thanks to God for, with, and above others, while all is but with their lips, vain words, and bodily wits, wherewith they onely dishonour God, and defile themselves and others, (that so joyn with them in words before their hearts and souls are therein agreed) by stealing the thanks, praise and worship from God to themselves: like the Pharisees that would presently be thanking God in words, and judging others, without the fear of God, faith in him, or any true love in feeling or affections, or desires, to know their own hearts, and the iniquities thereof; much less that God (or others) should know them, or they their duties to him. ——— But these forward minds are far from any sure savour of delight, or being in God; and therefore

their prayers or praises find no place with him, neither are they fal-se seemly in the mouths of such men where self is loved, and their minds employed to provide for the outward man; and their pride is the greater that so move, while they keep no true watch and guard over their thoughts, have no hold of their hearts, or stay of their minds, but multiply words in a powerless way of mans wisdom, by imagining evils, finding faults, accusing themselves and others, and asking sometimes what they do not in truth desire, and oft what they do not want, but to spend upon their lusts; wherein the most are missed, (as their consciences witness) being ignorant of the Apostles doctrine, fellowship and prayers, as they are of the knowledge of God, and the Godhead in the manhood of Christ.——But that no man may mistake my understanding in the commands of Christ Jesus my Lord, how to pray, or my practise in obedience thereto, let every one turn in their minds to his light, and there wait to know how he said, *Enter into thy closet, and shut thy door*, (forget not that) *and pray to thy Father in secret*: So Christ himself prayed in the mountain, in the garden, in the desart, alone from his Disciples, and required them to *watch and pray*.——And also appointed joynt praying, and said, Where two of you shall agree upon any thing to ask, it shall be granted of my Father which is in heaven: but (said he) *use no vain repetitions, as the heathen do*. And again, *Hitherto have you asked nothing in my Name; ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full*.——And his Disciples did afterwards so ask in his Name, in faith and feeling, and that without wavering, (as it is written) and prayed much, without ceasing, with all manner of prayers and supplications in the Spirit, and with the Spirit and understanding, not knowing what to ask but as the Spirit helped, and made requests with sighs and groans not to be uttered; and so asking, they received, whether privately alone, as *Paul*, when he felt the grace sufficient for him; or as agreed in particular cases, as was that in chusing one in the room of *Judas*, their praying together with one accord, their sitting so together waiting for the gift of the holy Ghost, (while they had received but the first fruits of the Spirit.) So likewise the Church prayed for *Peter*, and for others, on other occasions; but still more and more in the pure power and fervent love, as they received the more spiritual gifts of the holy Ghost.——By all which it is most evident, that the fire of that blessed Spirit of holiness at all times kindled the sacrifice; and the praise was not of men, but of God. And thus they prayed in Christs Name, as they were made partakers of his divine Nature: But what outward naming of Christ was there in all this? (which is a work that the rude and unruly soul, the wild and worldly mind, knows nothing of:) Or what of set times, places, or personal respects was used therein? though now men have learned frequently to take the Name of God and Jesus Christ in vain into their mouths, while they *hate to be reformed*, and neither know his Nature nor his Name; and therefore so many (under pretence of prayers and praises to God) stick not to scoff at the teach-

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ings of the holy Spirit, gift of the holy Ghost, silent waitings upon God, watching, praying, new lights, &c. and so go on blaspheming the *Father of lights*, and the holy Name by which his saints are called, as things most contrary to their natures, and fleshly affections; and therefore it highly concerns you every one to consider well with what you come before the Lord, and to examine your selves whether you are in the faith, whether Christ Jesus be in you, or you are reprobates. ——Now if Jesus Christ be forming in you, then the body is dayly dying; and if he be there formed, the body is dead because of sin, and the Spirit alive for righteousnes sake; and then all sensible things of bodily wits, of imaginations, natural reason and understanding are brought under the true light and heavenly Spirit, and yeilded up, so as to know and do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus; wherein I do not mean onely naming him, as his names are written in a Book, or on a Wall, or spoken of by polluted Lips, ——but in the light, and by his Spirit, with the thoughts and affections, naked, bare, and free from beholding bodily or earthly things, as altered from fleshly likings and affections into spiritual favour, sweetnes and delight in his divine presence, wherein the Spirit of prayer is freely given and felt, as a flaming desire in the heart to Jesus Christ, (the mighty power, love and wisdom of God) by the heavenly touch of spiritual love, which is neither bodily, nor can be bodily felt; onely the soul that is wholly devoted to God may and doth feel it, but not with any bodily wit, wisdom or skill, because it is not felt but in the spiritual desire of the soul that is cleansed (or waiting to be cleansed) from all unrighteousnes; and there it doth so warm, heat and quicken to watchfulnes in prayer and obedience, that it enlivenes the soul, and ravisheth it more and more with pure joy and consolation in him; so that the thoughts are gathered in at all times to think, speak and act soberly, sadly and seriously, and in prayer ever to express such words as God (onely by his Spirit) putteth into the heart, (like an eccho of mans voyce to his friend) which prayer is much alone, (as Christs also was) free from all lets and interruptions, and is the gift of the holy Ghost, and lasteth not very long at a time, (in the fervour of it) for that it is laborious to the Spirit, though very pleasant through the passion of love therein felt, truely tasted, and sweetly savoured, (not much unlike that of *Moses* when he opened not his lips, or of *Hannah* when she did but move her lips) which breaketh down all lusts and likings of earthly things with so great force, as that the Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence thereby, while the soul is wounded with the sword of love, and thereby overcomes and obtains the requests, in some sense as *Jacob* did; but the body then seems to fall down, and may not bear it, because the working is of so great force, that the most vicious and fleshly man on earth, (so touched) would be right sorrowful and sad therewith for the time, and loath all his lusts and fleshly likings of earthly things by him most delighted in before; as *Jeremy* said the love and feeling of God was made as burning fire in

his heart; and this is the holy Ghost and fire, even the love of God in man, burning and wasting all other loves and likings in mans soul, as a fire sticking in the bones, and filling all the powers of the soul with grace and glorious sweetness, as marrow fills the bones; and yet not without the wits, but within them; so full of might and power, (where it worketh within) that it smiteth down into, and through all; and throws down the body into quaking and trembling, for that it is so far unlike, and contrary to the body, that the body cannot skill of it, nor bear it: as was in like manner witnessed in *Moses*, *David*, *Habakkuk*, and others, and also in some of my dear friends that are living witnesses thereof, (yet in the flesh) onely our Lord Jesus moderateth it, and temperth it into a soft and sober sweetness, (by abating the fervour and motion in time convenient) and administreth life and peace as the soul becomes capable of it.——So that the holy Spirit teacheth for what and how to pray, watch, meditate and move to please God without any mans teaching; and so our prayer is continual, without ceasing, and most and best alone in the heart that is made pure and clean by the operation of the holy Spirit, that teacheth to do all things, and live ever in the love and sweet presence of God, without any great letting of lusts, vanities, or other tentations, as the soul becomes clean and purely devoted to him.

We read in holy Scriptures of the womans lost Groat, the pearl and the sute hid in the field, selling all, buying, *&c.* which certainly are matters of some importance to man, becaufe so significantly expresst by Jesus Christ of himself and mans soul; as of lighting a candle, sweeping, searching, finding, rejoycing, digging deep, selling all other merchandize, buying, *&c.* and therefore it skills much to have this Candle lighted, whereby mans soul may see this treasure in its self, and know the value of it, whereby it may be induced to sell all for it, which may not be until it be known that it is lost, and where, as in the inner part of mans own house: for as Jesus Christ was lost in mans soul, so there he is to be found;—— what was lost there by *Adam*, is to be found there in Christ Jesus, the pure pearl of high price, and primitive perfection: but he may not be there found in naming of him by any his outward names, nor as by fairing his name, or any power in mans heart, by the labour of his minde, or studying that name never so strongly or earnestly; for in this manner do those that are far out of the way think to finde him, and by so seeking miss of him, as neither knowing his Voyce, Name nor Nature; or taste any savour of him, or see comelinefs in him to desire him; but live without, as strangers to him, (even without GOD in the world:) but he that comes to have an inward sight of a little of that spiritual fairness and dignity which the reasonable soul had of and in God at first, (that was

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loſt in *Adam*] and is to be had again by grace in Chriſt Jeſus, as it ſhall be enlightned to ſee him ſpiritually, and ſhall not hide that light (as under a buſhel) by over-laying it with earthly buſineſs or affections, but ſhall love it above all earthly things, even as the ſoul is ſwept with the fear of God, waſht with tears within, *&c.* and ſo the groat, the pearl, the Kingdom of heaven, (that Chriſt ſaid is within) the heritage of heavenly love is found and repoſſeſſed in mans ſoul; for it is not ſo eaſily found as many uſually ſuppoſe; nor is it a work of one day onely, but attained by much waiting in the light, ſweeping, ſearching, watching, praying, and ſilent mourning before the Lord; and as the heart and conſcience becomes purified, then he ſhall finde that homely and peaceable preſence of Jeſus Chriſt (the pearl of great price) in the glimmering ſhadow of pure ſhining brightneſs in his ſoul.——

But though Jeſus Chriſt is ſo hid in the ſoul, yet no man is any whit the better thereby that doth not there finde him, and feel his operations ſpiritually, but remains (as it is written) a reprobate, whatſoever he may be otherwiſe.——— And a great mercy it is to man that this Jewel was loſt where it may be found again by the light in the ſearching and watchful ſoul, where Jeſus Chriſt full oft calleth and knocketh by his privy voice, ſtirring, reproving, and inviting the ſoul to a diligent ſearch, and withal to abandon other lovers, vanities and entanglements that hinder the hearing of his voice; for (as it is ſaid) this daughter muſt conſider and forget her own people, and her fathers houſe, (of worldly thoughts, loves, cares and fears) which hinder the ſoul that it can neither ſee him, nor hear him; and therefore all troubleſome thoughts, reſtleſs noiſe and imaginations are to be put away, as *Hagar* the bond-woman, that may not be heir with the ſon of the free woman; for while the ſoul is in the bondage of corruption, there is nothing within but black clouds, and ſpiritual blindneſs, with fleſhly thoughts and deſires, crying againſt it in the dark conſcience: but as the inner eye of the ſoul is opened in the light which is of Jeſus Chriſt, (in whom dwells all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily) there is that pure ſight and ſweet love of endleſs vertue and bleſſed reſt, which is found within the ſoul by the great and burning deſires for him, whereby all other loves and lovers are caſt out, and not ſuffered to reſt in the heart; which is a right ſeeking for him, this hid Treaſure.———And as this ſtirring and waiting in the light waxeth firm, ſtable and unmoveable, it will be holpen and comforted by inward and ſpiritual ſtrength of love and ſweet ſavour in the ſoul, with light of continual ſpringing faithfulneſs, and aſſured knowledge of him, and the powers of the thoughts onely upon him, and freed from every other affection, to reſt in the ſweet anointing, which is the ſhadow and taſte of Jeſus Chriſt; and the better any ſoul finds him, the more it will deſire him in cleanneſs of heart, and pureneſs of conſcience, to meet him more ſingly in the ſame way he appeareth, and wherein it hath ſeen and found him at firſt, (and other times ſince) moſt favourly. And though

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thou art altogether blind, and seest nothing rightly in thy self, or of the Godhead of Christ; yet consider seriously what thou wantest, and what thou hast lost; for thy soul can have no true content, or sure satisfaction, but in God from whence it is; and if thy heart say, I want, and would have Jesus Christ, and nothing but him onely, wait therein for him, (as not satisfied with that appearance) and follow him as he leadeth thee, and more and more press forward to know him, and the power of his resurrection, and fellowship of his sufferings, and to be made conformable to his death, and so grow up in him, as he moves and grows in thee; and yet know that when thou hast found the most of him in the highest ravishments of spirit, (as *Peter* and *John* in the mount, or as *Paul* mentioned) thou hast not therein fully attained to him as he is in his joy, for he is still above that any soul feeleth, as the fountain of all joy and sweetness; but thou art ever to know and feel a spiritual longing after him, and a loathing of all things else; and then thou wilt find him more worth then all things, even then all visions and revelations, (though not without visions and revelations) then all joy in heaven and earth, if it might be had without him: for thou wilt then say in thy soul, (as *David*) *whom have I in heaven but thee? and I desire nothing in the earth besides thee:* as feeling and finding that his pure presence onely gives understanding to the simple, he teacheth fools knowledge, whereat the Nations are angry, the people and their teachers rage, and imagine a vain thing against him and his holy One, as not willing to know him for fear of the Cross and the shame, (which he despised for the joy set before him) and are therefore grieved that any others should.

Conversion is properly a turning from evil to good, from lust to pure love, which is God; and this conversion is ever accompanied with repentance from dead works that are past, and out of that nature, love and liking, wherein they were wrought, to serve the living and true God; and therefore it is not every turning of mans body and mind from one outward form or practice to another, as it were thereby to serve and worship God; for then the divers Political turnings of former and latter times, would be conversion to him; which he may not so accept, because he changeth not, but is the same at all times, even the unerring Father of spirits, and so to be worshipped in spirit and in truth: and these are outward turnings from one act of mans will to another, or from evil to worse; as the Proselytes that the Pharisees made sevenfold worse then before, whilst the ground of sin, with its branches, remain standing, uncut down, or touch't, from whence such traditional turnings arise, to oppose that one truth and good way of the Lord wherein all obedient souls are made free from such shifts and changes: but while men have either not known the fear of the Lord, or are departed from it, left, and lost the power of godliness, and simple truth in themselves, (so that

that their ſalt is without ſavour) their minds run abroad, and their hearts are filled with fleſhly deſires, loves and fears, wherein they labour night and day, to gain and keep the love and friendſhip of this world, (which is enmity to God) with the profits and pleaſures thereof, and therein ſerve themſelves, like the beaſts that periſh; and have their hearts oft filled with wrath and revenge, (like unreaſonable beaſts againſt others of their own kind) when they are hindred of any their deſired ends, and likewiſe againſt ſuch as ſo hinder them not therein, unleſs by ſtanding in their way, (as the Angel before *Balaam*) and ſo touching their more quick and tender parts, and that onely in love, to bring them back into the light and fear of the Lord, that their blind and dead ſouls might be lighted and enlivened to have regard to the honeſt principle of God in themſelves and others, that would rule all men according to right reaſon, and clear them of their fleſhly luſts that war againſt their ſouls, did they not diſable themſelves thereto by withſtanding it, and the checks thereof in their own conſciences, and by yeilding to the enemy of their ſouls to have dominion over them, whereby the working of grace comes to be ſtopt, ſo that it may not enter, ſhine, finde room or reſt in their ſouls, though it be truely tendered, and there ſheweth it ſelf to diſcover things that differ, (as the Sun doth outward things where it is not letted) but while the ſtrong man thus armed keeps the houſe, the things he poſſeſſeth are in peace, the root, body and image of ſin ſtands, the falſe and miſruled love lives, and the ſoul remains inſenſibly wrapt up in ſtinking rags of ſin and ſelfiſhneſs, where it feeds on nothing but black ſmoke in thick darkneſs, and ſpiritual blindneſs, as a body of ſin and death, born about, and heavily loading the ſoul and conſcience, that it cannot comprehend the light, but every tentation (of the ſame nature with it) prevails over it, and leads it captive more and more into a ſervile ſlavery and luſtful living in fleſhly filth; for ſin is not any corporeal thing, and therefore not corporeally to be deſtroyed, ſtriven about, or contended with, neither have men any power of themſelves to amend this in themſelves, more then in others; and therefore cannot but ſo remain, until their minds be truely turned into, and ſurely kept in the pure light, which onely can diſcover, and ſhew them the fairneſs or foulneſs of their ſouls, and the love of Jeſus Chriſt, therein giving power to take up and bear the croſs within (in the powers of the ſoul) and feel the two Laws warring againſt each other, (as *Paul* ſometimes did) and the innermoſt (of the Law of the ſpirit of life) ſtriving for deliverance out of captivity, and to gain victory over the Law of the fleſh, earthly will, and worldly wiſdom that reſts ſeated in the bodily wits; and as the reaſonable ſoul comes to take part with, and thereby wait in the pure principle of light and ſpiritual leading, to have ſome ſight of it ſelf, and ſomewhat of the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge that are in Chriſt Jeſus, (as his free gift to all obedient ſouls) thereby the ſoul begins to ſee ſomewhat of it ſelf, and how highly it is concerned to keep a conſtant inward watch, labour and ſtrive (by the meaſure

measure of light and life (so inwardly received) to keep the thoughts from all bodily things, until the sore pain and miserable blindeness of that condition (as *Paul* when he cried out, *O wretched man that I am!*) be found and felt, and then will the Lord Jesus appear as the pain of this dark soul and conscience; wherein is to be a free suffering, with a patient waiting and abiding with him (in his love and meekness) until he shall please to raise the soul up, and cause the light to shine out of, and over this darkness, as the day-star arising in the heart, to give another life, whereby to overlive all the former dead and dark life, and then to think no more on that darkness past, (as a woman forgets her pain and peril, for joy that a man is born:) loathe and despise it; but be ever ready and quick in keeping the heart, and taking heed that no open door nor privy hole, be left to imaginations, wisdom of words, or earthly vanities, that would draw out the soul from the love of God; ever minding, that as we have born the ugly image of the earthly, so it is requisite that we bear the image of the heavenly; and as our Lord Jesus breaks down this earthly image of false love and likings, he sets up the contrary vertues of pure love, meekness, patience, and brotherly kindeness, of his own forming, in the poverty of such spirits; and also gives true zeal in spiritual devotion, with soberness and chastity in soul and body; and so puts down the old man, with his deeds, rotten desires, and affections, and there sets up the new man of a meek and chaste spirit, (created in him to good works, to walk therein) with all his parts and members fitly composed together for his service and glory; wherein the old members, eye, ear, heart, affections, imaginations, or desires, will not serve the turn; but all the whole vessel must be new, to hold the new wine and heavenly liquor of the blessed and endless life, and thereby be freed from fleshly uses, vain thoughts, light looks, unsavory words, carnal reasonings, and heeding the praise or dispraise of men, and mens judgements; but surmounting and over topping all lets and impediments in the way of this perfect freedom, and lightsome liberty in the Lords service, as guided and strengthened therein by his holy Spirit, as it turns the reason into that pure light, and the will into the eternal will, which is a great work, and therefore to be well waited in until there be no sin charged or felt as a load on the conscience, but all freely pardoned, (as it is discovered to the soul) and clean wiped away, and so the soul reformed by the spiritual light, and bright beams of Jesus Christ, (let into it) as burning desires, clean affections, holy and wise thoughts and considerations, and therewith abilities to flee all deadly stirrings in this travel of soul from the first old *Adam* to the second, that makes all things new. —— And though men should otherwise cease to meddle with worldly business, avoid outward delights and pleasures, and devote themselves to pray, read, study, learn and confer of heavenly matters; sigh, weep, or do any other act outwardly, or otherwise; yet if he love himself, mind or carefully heed providing for the flesh, or outward man, or have any other earthly fears, cares, or immoderate desires; this

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will not do it; but the greater is the deceit by such forsakings and actings, in his becoming affected with himself, as if better then others; or in slighting others, by terms or rules of distinction; (whereby he is so much the worse, and more disabled to good:) or if he suffer his heart (as all) to rest in bodily feelings of spiritual comforts or sweetness, or set his heart on any such fleshly savours; he thereby loseth that life he seemeth to seek for, because not rooted and grounded in love; but the fleshly part gains ground again, in the earthly dark and dead nature; and then is the law of sin revived for the time: but yet if there be no wilful sin, or liking thereto, it is not he, but sin that striveth in him, which he consenteth not to: And thus have many been troubled and overlaid for a time with weight upon their weaker parts, that they have not had (for that time) any clear sight, or freedom in themselves, but sate sadly without any knowledge of their own conditions, or abilities to move one step forward, because sin got so great a hold (or as a lodging) in their fleshly parts, that it troubled the Reason, and sometimes so far prevailed, as to occupie the affections of the soul; while the Spirit as a law within, was labouring for deliverance, until the Lord Jesus pleased to prepare the soul, and break into it by his blessed presence, and give it feeling of pure love; and so stretch the heart forward, to fathom and follow what is before; for behinde are all bodily things, thoughts, desires, fears, and such like, that hinder the comfort in, and speed of, the whole work: for nothing is to be kept from the slaughter, that is for destruction; no mean in destroying sin, though a right hand or eye, they must away, and give place to the divine work of the Spirit in the light, which is before: as the spiritual vertues beg n in the Reason of the willing soul, and to be perfected in love, as it comes to be reformed into the grace of Christ, to a perfect hatred of the deeds of the flesh, and all wavering mindedness, and want of love; for otherwise he hinders the work through his own wilfulness, and choice, in the contrary nature; which will cause all to be to little purpose, troublesom, and heavie, as a working in the fire, (if not thereby destroyed) because of his not feeling any grace, or spiritual savour therein.

The ways, wiles and devices of the evil one, to deceive and devour souls, are such, and so divers, (in these later days) that the ignorant and unskilful souls, may not easily escape, because he takes all advantages, by the times, temptations, bodily wits, and faculties of such dark souls, to lead them into self-love, and the sundry kindes of lustful living, in the vanities of their mindes, wantonness and pleasure, upon the earth, (*as fitting themselves for a day of slaughter*) and so keeps them (while he may) in presumption, or else but if once he see any soul would entirely give themselves to be spiritual by employ, then he striveth (by himself and his ministers) to set their sins in order before them; and tells them they are great sinners, and more in this change and turning then in any

thing before, saying to them, That is not the way, but a denial of Christ, a fancie, and female, of a Fanatick spirit, and for some wicked end, and that is will bring them into contempt, want and poverty, wherein none will pity them: that they must change their conditions with their mindes, wives and children come to want: that they will fall into bodily sickness, and be laid in prisons: that they should have learned men to advise them better, the Ministers to admonish them, and pray for them: to take counsel at *the Priests lips*, which *preserve knowledge*; and not run of their own heads, with a few giddy, contemptible people, that are ignorant of the Scriptures, and Original tongues; and if they depart not from their new way, greater temptations will overtake them. And with much more of this kinde, doth this flattering devil seek to beguile such souls as hearken to him, by the *cunning craftiness* of such as *lie in wait to deceive*, and that entangle *with enticing words of mans wisdom*, to beguile their souls, with bodily savours, sweetness of wit, arts, and outward exercises, and thereby (if possible) draw them aside from the simplicity, and puff them up with conceit of themselves; as if they had by such wisdom (and the ways thereof) formerly found the feeling of heavenly joy; and so lead them back again, and up into high notions and conceits of a proud minde; until they become base and blockish, and thereby fall full lowe at last, with their cold, dry and barren souls; for the more they imagine to gain by such means, the greater will be their loss, and they the farther off from what they so seem to seek, and much more indisposed to return into the right way of obtaining it; for thereby the minde will be oft, and highly lifted up, as if it were in a happie estate and condition, more holy, vertuous, and better then others; and to rejoyce, as if they had escaped a very great temptation; and to conceive angry stirrings in themselves, when others seem not so to esteem of them: and the flattering spirit will suddenly praise and applaud such, as for good deeds, and vertuous living; and this last is the sorest and greatest of all temptations, and most dangerous, because of the delight men will seem to feel about them, by such sounds to the ear, and sweet savour of sense, tickling them with delight therein; as if all were well, and they had much grace, and were rightly travelling, with their mindes from fleshly things, while they are onely ravished with spiritual pride, wherein the vain love, and self-conceit, prayeth, weepeth, speaketh and thanketh God, (with the Pharisee) while they know not God; but their proud hearts deceive them, and lead them to shew outward love and meekness in speech and gesture, as if they were spiritually vertuous, and that they disliked nothing but sin, onely because it is contrary to God; and yet are even then at the gate of spiritual death, so puft up with pride and pleasure therein, as that they are even dead while they live, or rather twice dead, and plucke up the roots; become servants to men and times, mistaking one thing for another, with their fleshly hearts got asleep, and puffed up, resting in the root and rottenness of sin, black and thick darkness, filling their souls; which may be hid

from

from Jesus Christ, yet Christ Jesus serve it, and abhors it and their services thereof, because of their hypocrisie and hereſie, ſo accompanied with ſelfiſh and ſpiritual pride, (which was never learned of Christ) as their God; for man makes any thing his God that his heart is in love with; that he takes content in, dares ſin againſt God for, or wrong any man by; and ſo ſuch men have their divers kinds of Idol-gods; one his belly; another the applauſe of men; a third his opinions and words, heard or ſpoken; (whereas ſuch ſerve not the Lord Jeſus, but their own luſtful minds) and every other thing that a man chooſeth by his own act, to take pleaſure in, is his God; and then when God ſtirs up ſuch ſouls to obedience, and gives them ſuitable abilities, theſe proud hearts reſiſt all, and inſtead of obedience, become rebellious, heady, harſh, and high-minded, abuſing the tender mercies of the Lord God, in the light of his ſpiritual leadings to repentance: and this condition is (as aforeſaid) the more deſperate, becauſe therein ſuch conclude that all is well, and ſound, and that they are right, ſure, and righteous, (even above any ordinary Phariſee) and ſo arrogate to themſelves. And therefore hear and conſider, thou that thinkeſt thou ſtandeſt, that ſuppoſeſt thou art raiſed from death to life, haſt taſted of the good word of God, and born (it may be) ſome afflictions; and take head of this falſe liberty, for then will Satan cry and winnow thee, and be reaching thee, as aforeſaid; or as ſometime he would have done Jeſus Chriſt, to caſt himſelf down, to turn ſtones into bread, &c. And full many have ſo fallen by his means into this high ſpiritual pride, and though that there in they have done God ſervice, and unleſs the ſoul be rooted and grounded in love, and ſo in meekneſs, (with a ſpiritual feeling of Jeſus Chriſt as God equal with the Father) it will be apt to yield to ſuch tranſformings, and to ask (as the Diſciples ſometimes did) *who ſhall be greateſt?* and ſo may ſoon depart from the ſimple and pure life, and looſe their hold of that which leads the humble and meek to perfection; and therefore what great care, waking and diligence; yea, what faithfulneſs is requiſite in keeping in the light that will let men ſee the deceit, and lead them in the way to eſcape the evil thereof? for (as we read) the Lord Jeſus was tempted, but was not overcome, becauſe the Devil found nothing in him wherein he might faſten the temptation. ——— And this is of experience and adviſement to all waiting ſouls, that when a temptation come, and more eſpecially love and likings of earthly things, heed them not, conſider them not, whether in reſpect outward profit or loſs, ſtanding or deſpiſing, fearing or flattering; for if the Devil (by himſelf or inſtruments of his inſtruments) prevail with thee to conſider it, thou art then (thereby) more than half overcome, becauſe the ſame nature in thee will be apt to joyn with it; and the great danger is, leſt thou ſhouldſt like it, or be afraid of it, and ſo be overcome by it. ——— Therefore keep within, in the light, that thou maiſt be able to ſay to thy ſelf, (in that caſe) I have choſen my way, my part, my portion is in Chriſt Jeſus; him I love, in him I have righteouſneſs and ſtrength, in him I rejoyce and

enjoy all things; and nothing with him, but soul of him; for he accepts me as worthy to love him, &c. and be sure to be bold and chear therein; and then shalt thou find thine enemies less bold against thee: for truth never suffers more then when it is still and silently provided. Though these enemies will be still striving against thee; and calling thee of danger, and perilous things to hold thee in a hurry; and to terrify thee of thy aspirations; and first to deliver thee aside into anger, and vexation of rebuke, that they may have wherefore to accuse thee: chuse for thee heed thereof, and *keep thy tongue as with a bit and bridle*; and as thou comest to know Jesus Christ spiritually, thou wilt also come to a heavenly love, in being despised, spitted at, trampled upon, and abused; and if there shall happen to be some inward regret, or arising against it, then light will shew thee the evil of it, and the spirit of love will suppress it, and give victory over it; and (as thou attendest faithfully) thou wilt find and know, that God forsaketh no man in such temptations, unless it shall be to encrease their spiritual strength, (if they suffer a while patiently, and not turn to folly): that they may find Jesus Christ, the sweet and ready way, full of spiritual refreshments and comforts; and themselves poor, blind and naked without him, and to have nothing but what he giveth, and herein suffer much blustering of Satan and his ministers, without heeding, or rather with despising such temptations, setting them at nought, &c. But if any shall strive with his thoughts and bodily wits to drive away temptations, and put them out as by mastery, thereby will the enemy get advantage and overcome: and therefore (as before, so I say again) never withdraw thy thoughts from the temptations into the light of Jesus Christ, where the striving and life of strength lieth; and call on him for deliverance and victory. ——And also beware thou never shew such temptations to any worldly men (though reputed never so wise, learned or religious) that have not felt the like tryals in themselves, for they will certainly bring thy soul into greater danger by their worldly advice as the fleshly feeling. ——And this also know; that the Lord is pleased to leave the soul, for sometimes (for its tryal a little season) that in mercy he may gather it more clearly into himself, to grow and spring up as a morning-star; and deliverance he will surely give (in the needful time) to all his members, that they may exult in him more fully; and then he gladdeth them with his presence, and fasteneth them to himself, shewing them his secrets, and giving them treasures of wisdom and knowledge: He brings in light, and expels darkness, opens the eye of the soul, and lighteth it to see how good it was for it to be so troubled: she like that of *David* who mused, and thereby learned the Lords righteous judgements.

I shall here say little of the Faith that stands in the wisdom of men, (though that be most in use and esteem with the worldly wise men of this

generation)

generality) because he is set under in other places as the great Enemy of Secrecy; and where the Voice of Christ is their own and others conscience, and the other earthly ends and ways them into perilous paths of sin and selfishness, from the pure and faithful path of Jesus Christ, the endless light, love, wisdom and power of God, whereby man is convinced, judged, and all things reproved that are reproveable, and the heart turned from the vain delights and pleasures of the world, and the mind gathered to the measure of the light in the conscience, before which all unrighteousness is condemned, and with which the soul comes into a waiting condition for learning, it usually feels in self heavy loadens, dullness, and indisposedness thereto, by reason of such obstructions as thereby (and otherwise also) lie in the way: yet as Jesus Christ moveth and desireth, in the measure of purely desired; and thereupon he further moveth to work his blessed work in man; so in a reasonable time, that soul comes to have faith wrought in him, with knowledge of Christ Jesus, and his spiritual presence, light and truth; and for this end, that soul begins to wait upon him as all times diligently with the whole heart, until he give words whereby to pray, and do fitly order the affections to that continual duty, without using words otherwise heard, lest vanity of mind and spiritual enemies enter and blind the eyes, and hinder the soul from chusing the love of God in Christ Jesus, whereby the heart should be cleansed and established to feel and find how fair and profitable his work will be in and to the soul, as it comes to know the two days or lights, the false light and true light, the love of this world and fleshly things, and the pure love of Jesus Christ, through grace establishing the soul with the real difference between them, and begins to feel some increasing knowledge in the true light; to feel the false light, worldly love, and sinful pleasures seem little, and pass away as a shadow; which is the light that the Devil brought in by Eve and *Adam*, saying, they should *be as gods*, knowing good and evil, whereby the inner eye of *Adams* soul was shut, and the spiritual light then over-laid, as withdrawn from his soul, and the outward eye of fleshly love and worldly liking was opened in him, with which he did not see before, nor know that new day of evil and darkness, where in he and all his posterity, (in that nature) now rejoyce, and take their pastime; and yet but as in vain shews, unskilful heavinels of heart, with fleshly angerinels, fears and dreads; and this before the eye of mans understanding be opened, so as to discern spiritual things, or to understand Scriptures; and no doubt but these are well known unto many, who have also in prayer and otherwise felt and tasted the sweetness of the spiritual work, so as to have thought nothing so pleasing as it, and have not known what it was that they so delighted in, but it was indeed the gift of God in the light, to be waited on as it begets devotion, contrition, many sweet tears, burning desires and mournings for sin, to scowre and cleanse the heart, and mould it into a wonderful sweetness of a ready mind to fulfil the will of God, and to trust him without questioning what shall become of the outward man, or other like relations; so is the will of the Lord were done in him and by him.

him. But some that so obtained to this first gift of God in light, that would have wrought them into a like condition and resolution, (had he been attended upon therein,) have departed from it, as many did that followed Christ, (for a time) which caused him to say to Peter and the rest, *Will ye also go away?* but if such inward feeling as this, bring with it true and pure love, then it may not be so lost, though it may cause it to seem hid or clouded for a time, and especially in case the mind so moved shall turn out (by censens) into the visible things, and there upon the evil one catch it, and transform it into an angel of light: and then that soul is not able to see clearly within it self who is working there, (much less afar off) though he have a kind of outward feeling, but no stability of soul, or inward certainty, but all sounds and favours, any way satisfying the senses, draw out the minde from Jesus Christ the true light, so that it cannot then enter in and behold him spiritually, and love him perfectly, as leading into heavenly thoughts and desires, and to a loathing of self and all earthly delights; and then (by reason of such lazie and lustful desires) the stedfast minding of JESUS is neglected, and the intended knot of union (then in knitting) becomes loose, and unsit for the time. But of this be sure, that what spiritual feeling, revelation or manifestation knits that knot of love and devotion to Jesus Christ, and opens the eye of the soul to a more clear and spiritual knowing of him, also begets meekness, and love, and settledness in the soul, and casts man down by reason of his unworthiness and unprofitableness towards God and man, as a wretch and out-cast of men, unmeet to live amongst them, by reason of his beastly, lewd, fleshly and blind mind, ignorant of spiritual things, and of his own soul, not knowing Jesus Christ, nor any of his spiritual workings or worship; for that none worship him truely, but in the spiritual revelation and feeling of himself: for it is by meekness of love that a man is kept single to God, and free from harshly beholding other mens deeds, (unskilfully done) and looking on others evil actions irregularly, or otherwise then as matters of mourning and cautions to himself and them; and if he reprove them, so do it in love soberly and secretly, and to look on God and on himself, as if there were no other man in the world, and himself most wretched and vile, and teacheth him ever to watch diligently, lest sin get entrance into his soul; to judge or condemn no man hastily, but say always to himself, *what have I been? what am I? what hath God done for me? what have I done against him, and what for him?* thereby to come and see his own state and station; and as the Lord giveth him grace, so wait in that his own measure of the gift, and never fain to have more then he hath in faith and feeling, or act otherwise then he hath received grace, and keeps to that, (though it be never so little) and moves not out of that so received, or to do any thing because another did or doth it, for that cannot be of faith, but will run a man out of breath, and become sin to his soul. And know for certain, that he who waiteth meekly, and acteth according

to

to his measure of grace received, until more be given by the pure motion and revelation of Jesus Christ, and yet ever desireth more, most and best, (but works onely according to what he hath) shall be sure (in due time) to have a suitable supply. And thus ought every man to enter particularly into his own soul, to know it, and the strength thereof, with its fairness or foulness; to see its dignity at first, and wretchedness by sin since, with the labouring in the soul against the ground of all sin, (little and much) which ground is onely the false misruled love of mans heart to himself, from which at first sin had its beginning in him; and until this fallow-ground be plainly plowed up, and all fleshly and worldly loves, hopes, desires and fears be removed, the soul can never see and feel the pure burning spiritual love of Jesus Christ, nor enjoy his presence in the soul, or discern spiritual things by the light of understanding; (which is not right until wrought into the fear of God) for thereby is the mind and heart drawn out to all sinful likings; by mans own understanding to rest in all beastly love, earthly thoughts, and fleshly things; and therefore it is (at first) so laborious to love Jesus Christ truely and spiritually, and may not be while his love is not felt therein, because that must teach him to hate his fleshly life, father and mother, (as Christ said) and take up the cross quietly, and follow Christ, (as before is said) to the mortifying of his members that are earthly, even every unclean lust, and unskilful love of himself, and see the ground of sin broken within, and by degrees the body thereof destroyed, as there shall be a loathing and despising of it in the heart, and of all the beauty, liking and fairness of this present world, as a stinking Carrion; labouring night and day to war spiritually against it, and all its enticements, as the spiritual eye shall be opened, for otherwise none can see it, much less war against its enterprises.

* As *Adam* by his sin saw and felt the new light of fleshly love and likings of this world, (which in his innocency he saw not) in the new and evil day that *Job* cursed, (being the concupiscence which the Devil and man made) might perish, and be no more; ——— for the everlasting love of God in Jesus Christ, is the true light and blessed day, (love and light being of and in him) in whose light the children of the day see light, and greatly rejoyce. But they that truely seek him, must be content to abide a while in the darkness, for the darkness was before the light, *and the evening and morning were the first day*; and man may not suddenly come from the dark day, (which is the love of himself and this world) into the perfect love of God in and to his soul, and to see and feel spiritual things, gaining victory in his thoughts to bring all into obedience; because it is first night or darkness with him, wherein the love of this world is shut out, and the day springs from on high, and visiteth; and as the soul becomes quiet and still, the light breaks forth more and more unto the perfect day, as he becomes wholly acquainted of his

his sin, and the savour of it. —— But as there is a passing to this light through the evil day or night of darkness, (wherein is no pleasure, but sorrow and sighing, doubts and deadness of soul) there is a blind longing after, and thinking on Jesus Christ, how good and blessed he is, with desires to feel his love, and be lighted with his presence, (as *David* saith: In thy God in thy light) or be hid (though in pain) from beholding the world, and its false likenesses, (which so well please those that are blind in spiritual things) and dwell quietly in this darkness, (wherein Satan cometh with his likenesses and light, under colour of true light) until the light of love (by little and little) break forth to him (so dwelling in the shadow of death) and shine through the darkness and death, &c. For there are many that would seem to forsake the love of the world, and also would come to the love of God, and his light, to understand him: but through this darkness they will not come to know themselves what they have been, and are in their sinfulness against God, to enter into themselves, and view all things there, with all wicked stirrings and risings in their hearts of pride, envy, anger, and other evils, and to wait desiring in the still silence, and spiritual watchfulness to Jesus Christ, (as his Saints ever did) but so soon as (in their own wills) they seem to have forsaken the world outwardly, they presently think themselves holy, and full fit for spiritual understanding, and heavenly mysteries; and that they love God perfectly, and have received grace through the special gift of the holy Ghost; for they are stirred and seem to feel knowledge, as it were then given to them, without great study before-hand, and a heat of desire therewith to preach forth truth and righteousness, and will run into words thereof as with great forwardness and zeal, &c. And this they hold for the grace of God, and visitation of his blessed light, before their souls pass through this darkness: —— though this light of knowledge, and heat of desire, they feel, cometh not of the true love of Jesus Christ, but from the Devil, and his transformings; as being onely a fained light, and likeness of the true light, and Son of God; whereby cunningly he leadeth blind souls into a presuming of being themselves righteous, and abasing others, (as the Pharisees did) and so have no light of grace to them given by the holy Ghost: for though the knowledge they have were in it self outwardly true, yet by the Devil and mans own wit, it makes onely a fained light of true things, but not the light of the true Son, nor approved of by his pure light in their Consciences; and such men are so blind by these fained lyes, and puffed up with spiritual pride, that they see it not, nor are willing to consider it; but highten their hearts against the true light, supposing the feeling in their own wills is perfect freedom of spirit; and so like clouds without rain, (tossed to and fro) bring forth one device, errour and heresie after another, which are known by their wild minds exercised in covetousness, much vanity, talking, disputing, contending about words, raylings and revilings others, and persecuting them; and yet will not be ashamed to say, They do all this in charity,

and

and zeal for righteousness, [illegible] from [illegible] and therefore hath
[illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] and [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

to keep that he hath, and yet covets more; for he that covereth Jesus Christ, and him onely, he hath more rest of heart and conscience, true love and delight in his soul, in one hour, then he that loveth the things of this world, hath, or can have, in all his life-time: and this darkness is but as mid-day, when the sun (through out the darkness, and Jesus Christ giveth rest to his beloved, that trusteth him in his counsel, and doubteth not, nor is afraid for any evil tydings, because his heart is fixed; and is well assured, that the light of knowledge, and feeling of spiritual love, is in Christ Jesus of him, and for him, and that the darkness in forsaking of worldly love, is by the same, that reforming the soul onely to and for himself; and that he regardeth it not, and does not without use, for grace is inward, given and wrought by degrees as man applyeth his heart thereto. As fire, Jesus Christ by his light and Spirit calleth from worldly vanities, and that then brings great sweetness, and joy with it: but if left, and not seconded, it stayeth there but for a little season, though the remembrance thereof abideth; and after that, the time of reforming and setting the soul at liberty, is with much labour and watching; for when the mind is set against all sin within and without, and the desire wholly on the love of Jesus Christ, wherein there will be felt many lets, (from within, in his own will, and without from his enemies by temptations) and his great torment that he hath lived so long in the false love of the world, and this will stick close to him, until he pass through spiritual tribulation, and be purified through fears, doubts and perplexities, that he will be near unto despair, and wholly left unto the enemy, save onely that the Lord Jesus privately loveth him; and such a soul hath also private trust in his mercy: and go he never so far, he shall not fall, because he is born up from despair, though with great inward pain; so that he sometimes knoweth not whence it cometh; and yet then that soul would not for all the world be blinded with the false love, as before it was; for that were hell to such a soul: and this the Lord Jesus doth in pure love, and for great profit to that soul, to drive out sensuality, that it might receive spiritual light. And when the soul is reformed in feeling, and freely accepteth the gift of perfect cleansing, (to enter into the rest, and cease from his own works, as God did from his) then is Jesus Christ more sweetly familiar with the soul, (that is so brought through the fire of afflictions into true peace) and in this working, some souls have great devotion in prayer, and main touchings of spiritual light in understanding; and others of comfortable heat, and great sweetness, (and never come fully to this restful darkness) with a present fervent desire of lasting love, and longing after God: but these inward feelings (where they stand in compunction and sorrow for sin, or of devotion, or outward imagination) are not the feelings that the soul shall have, and feel in the gracious habitation with God spiritually, (while in this life, or body of flesh) though they may be gracious gifts of God, and not to be abused or neglected; although the soul that feels them is not yet reformed

spiritual infeeling; for it hath not yet received the gift of perfect and spiritual burning love to Jesus Christ; as they may come to, if they be faithful in it; and yet they may feel more of the love of God then others, (that have that gift in the way towards perfect feeling) in as much as the feeling sheweth more outwardly by their fervour in bodily tokens, as in weeping, praying, speaking, and other bodily stirrings and strivings, that some others would think them ravished with love, &c. Yet still consider, that these stirrings and strivings are of God, to stir them from the worldly love, and lusts of the flesh, that have so long been rooted in their hearts; from which (worldly love) they may not be drawn out by such feeble stirrings of great fervour, and outward strength, which is no true token of much love, but of weakness, and little love in their souls; that cannot bear a little touching of God; for it is yet fleshly, and fastened thereto, and not mortified therefrom by the work of the Spirit of God. For the touch seem so quick, and also delectable over all things felt before in fleshly love of earthly things, that it is over-taken with it, for that it is so new, sudden and strange, that the body cannot well bear it, but breaketh out into weepings, bodily stirrings, and other actions; as Christ said, the *old bottles* would break, and not hold the *new wine*, but that God keepeth it whole, in mercy letteth it break out into tears, and words; through weakness and feebleness of soul, and not because of much love, (as some may suppose) but afterwards, when (through love) the uncleanness is melted out of the soul, by such fervour, then is the love clear, and standeth still; and then perfect love casteth out fear; then is the soul in peace, and much more in love then before, though it shew less outward; for it is now all whole, at rest within, and little appearing outwardly. —— For in the first state, such feelings come to the soul suddainly, before it be well aware; and as it comes before the soul knows it, so it oft returneth or departeth without its knowledge; neither can the soul tell how to come to that state again, nor know where to find it; for the thoughts are not yet kept within in the light, with a firm longing desire to Jesus Christ, nor the eye of the soul kept open, and neer to the spiritual beholding of heavenly things; and so the heart is not fixed: and then what weakness and unsuitableness is in all, without stedfastness, firm faith, and full intent to God; to know his secrets, and obey his will? —— And it is always to be diligently minded, that there are two manner of feelings; the one inward, according to mans bodily wit and skill; and the other more inward, or within that, being of spiritual light, wisdom and skill, which the holy Ghost teacheth, and planteth in the powers of the soul. —— So there is a meekness that is gained, by the working of reason, in fleshly feeling; and another that is deeply fest in the soul; and is the free and spiritual gift of love: and it is a full hard thing, and a great mystery to him that stands in the working of his own reason, to keep constant rest and softness in his heart, and charity to love men, when they despise him; without resisting or repining thereat, *&c.* Both these are of love,

but the first worketh by the motion of the soul, the second by the holy Spirit in the soul, makes the soul to be moved. The first meekness is, when the soul beholding its own vileness, and judging himself unworthy of any mercy, or good thing at the hand of God, and (as it were) a creature worthy of all hardness, thus humbleth himself down under all others, and grieveth in his heart, when he is overcome by any temptation, confesseth and mourneth, and striveth for greater grace. But this is not perfect meekness, for it comes of beginning to profit in grace, caused by beholding of sins; and this is the meekness that love worketh by the reason of the soul's own need. But perfect meekness the soul feeleth of the light and spiritual knowledge of Jesus Christ, seeing him to be all and only in the soul, and for it; and hath so great love and joy in that spiritual sight, that she getteth it not (what more) and knoweth Jesus Christ with all the love it hath to behold him; and heedeth not any unbecomeliness or sins before done, but setteth herself with all sins past, and good deeds also, at nought, as unworthy to be remembred; and judgeth no creature (neither better nor worse than himself) but loveth and beareth the good in all, and every man therein; and slighteth and despiseth all the joy and worship of this worldy as seeming it is little and nought, in regard of the joy and love the soul feeleth in the spiritual sight of Jesus Christ, and knowledge of his purity and holiness, that though he might have all worldly joy, and worship without sin, yet he would not meddle with it. The world hath no favour in this meekness, but is exceeding far from it. It is the lover of Jesus Christ only that hath this meekness abiding in him with liking and gladness, and that without any heaviness in desiring for it.——But the world hath a proud meekness belonging to an hypocrite, (who had this joy in gladness by the gift of the holy Ghost) and do heed the praises of men, as also fear their dispraises, taking pleasure or displeasure therein themselves: and it's like this was the snare that *David* prayed to have his heart plucked out of. And many that yet love the praise of men more than God or his praise, do busie themselves, travel and labour, with their wills, wits and affections, and so think on God, Christ and outward exercises, as it were by their strength to draw out of themselves a feeling of the love of God in Christ, even by bodily force and masterly, if that were possible. But these love not spiritually, nor is this a kindly or gracious work of love, but a kind of mad-doing of the soul at Reasons bidding, which (without meekness, and forsaking the love of earthly things) is very dangerous to beget spiritual pride, which other sins done in meekness of love, and forsaking of all earthly affections, may finde favour with the Lord, and be by him changed from mans own works into spiritual workings, for as man cannot think a good thought of himself, so he ought to forbear his own thinkings, words and works, as not good, and therefore can find no acceptance with God; and wait with patience for the Lords working in

him,

him, to will and to do, as it is good pleasure. All other workings being to the said righteous sufferings, and love, as the Prophet said, the kindling of fires unto your selves, walk in the sparkles of your own fire. In this an imperfect Lover, being moved chiefly by the affections of mans but imperfect holiness, have much ado in the first Spiritual assaults, killing all the affections in the soul, and so destroying the quickly made humble and meek, loving, and lowly, which will not be heard how the terms of Meekness, Subjection, Love, and Cleanness, is wrought so quickly, and surely, without travel or painful labour of the body, and bodily wits, and therefore they labour and toil day after day, with their Reason, and outward exercise, in their own strength, to get terms, and make love, by prayer and other stirrings, and while they seem to get any thing, have much more to do to rid with all their fighting against sin, seekings for grace, and wrestlings about it; and therefore are like Waves, sometimes above, and soon again underneath; up and down, in and out, off and on, getting and losing, and so weary their wits, and fire themselves; because all this striving is in their own reason, might, and strength of self-will, as fighting with themselves, but neither in true savour, nor love, and therefore have not the certainty or upper hand of what they strive about, and sit them still out the full rest, because no man may so put himself fully into Gods hands, so that man seeth him not, but his eye being shut, he thereby closeth it faster, (lest he should see) and will not know it; and though some such may suffer bodily pains for what they do as in love to Jesus Christ, and that gladly, yet being not led by the holy Spirit (led by the fire of burning love and brightness) it is fully mingled with high pride, prejudicious, judging, and disdaining them by whom they suffer, and but these lay and think they are in charity, and that they suffer all for the love of God, but are beguiled by the Devil's transformings, because their knowledge of God is principally in imaginations, and their love to him in natural affections, and lastly likeness, mistake best, but as milk before strong meat, for in strong feeding on the Bridal's Bread, as his own Table, the imaginations may not be so feedable, under-stood the feeling, understanding, mean and is, and then only as a hand-maid, waiting on the hand of her Dame,

Many do like well of the Nature of Meekness, Lowliness, and Patience, and in their own (selves and wills) but are enemies thereto in their affections, through grudgings in themselves at those in whom they are, and so can have no love to Vertue, or vertuous men, or know how to delight in them as such, spiritually; and what these men do by the stirrings of reason in them, is but out of a fleshly fear of God, (or rather applause of men) for Jesus Christ is but a stranger in their soul, and his image be there interformed, is meekness and love, which is this Love

ry; and therein he discovereth himself and his secrets; as he said to his Disciples, *Learn of me, for I am holy and meek, and you shall find rest to your souls*: and again, *Love ye one another*; or, *love together as I have loved you*; by this (said he) *shall all men know that you are my disciples*. He did not say, This should be known by working miracles, casting out Devils, preaching, teaching, or praying; which should be more minded by most than meekness, love and wonders (that they may otherwise for if every man did them) yet meekness and love are the greatest of miracles in these last and perilous times, wherein men strive to resist evil, (but to suffer it) to revenge wrongs, rather than to forgive them, as Christ commanded; rather to hate love and meekness, than be possessed of them; fasting and endeavour strange, and such is not only the name of love or meekness in mens will, which is but altogether imperfect: but meekness as in true love and spiritual affections, is perfect meekness; and he that hath this, is a meek man, poor in spirit, that knoweth himself as he is, and ought to be known, dissembleth not, but loveth all others in or for God; but where grudgings are in the heart towards any, or unquiet thoughts, the heart is not clean, the conscience is not pure, nor the walking charitably, or with God, in love of clean affections, and consequently in and for God: for the more evil any one doth to a meek man, the more good doth he to him, as to a man out of his right minde; and so do thou, and pray for such as Christ commanded, and observe how he himself did by *Judas* (for all his wickedness) and to others, never so much as saying to any man, Thou lyest; though some falsly accused him, said, *He had a devil*, &c. neither do I read that he reproved *Judas* openly, but rather waited for his repentance to the very last: and the more like to Jesus Christ thou are herein, the more thou lovest thy self onely in God, and not out of him, and so thou lovest truly, and not onely for righteousness & vertue of God in thee or others; so thou lovest not thy self, but God; and if thou be yet bound in sin, and feelest the burden of it, then so thou lovest thy self for God, to be freed by him from sin, into his service; and so if thou truly live in meekness, thou lovest every man in the first place, thou lovest God in man; and in the second place, thou lovest man for God, that he may be his; & so should God be loved in all, and for all, and all in him; and this is true love; but if thy minde be troubled, or unquiet when thou art rebuked, belyed, or evilly entreated, then there is pride remaining in thy heart, (seem thou never so holy outwardly) and there lyes hid like a Fox in his den; ——— And no good deed canst thou possibly do, but it is spoiled therewith, and thou hast thy reward: ——— for it is a mystery to love mens persons, (which ever ought to be) and loathe their sins, as contrary to God, but it is no mystery to sin or pretend love, fast, sit silent, preach, give to the needy, &c. for these things bad men may do; but to love men truly, and hate the evil in them, is the gift of God by the holy Spirit of Love, which he gives freely and readily to all that wait

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truely for it; and is therefore most precious and profitable: and without this, there is not meekness of love to all men, and a seeking the salvation of all, but a stumbling and erring from the truth, and hardening one thing for another, errours for truth, and truth for errours, because Covetousness and Anger is not forsaken, while any other love (but what is to or in God and for God) remains as to any creature or thing. And thou shalt finde it easier to forsake riches and suits, then the love of them; for he that coveteth or desireth any thing he hath not, and thereby keeps back the clean desires to Vertue, is yet covetous; and look how much sorrow thou feelest upon the loss of any thing, so much was thy love to it: To that thou coveteſt not ſpiritual things, ſo as thou oughteſt, but that thou ſtumbleſt at them; and then how shouldſt thou be allied with kindly ſavour within, while the fleſh retains its bodily ſavour without?

——But this know, that diligent watching, inward hunger and pains helpeth the holy Spirit in thee to overcome; yet while the bad root lives, its evil branches will be ſpringing up, for therein is the compleat nature of the evil root, and thereof the loathſome fruit, which every evil man brings forth, out of the evil treaſure of his heart, and there the ſtrong man armed keeps the houſe, until there be a free yeilding to Jeſus Chriſt in meekneſs and pure love, wherein he may overcome that ſtrong man, and ſtrip him of all his ſtrength, and weapons wherein he truſteth, and create the new man according to his own image and likeneſs of righteouſneſs and true holineſs; and as thou receiveſt him with ability to exerciſe thy ſences, and diſcern things rightly; to have Jeſus Chriſt formed in thee, and as thou conceiveſt him, and he lives in thee, thou wilt bring forth good things out of the good treaſure of his life, by ſtrong deſires, and earneſt actings to pleaſe him, and be made like unto him; not as of fleſhly forming, but in full meekneſs of minde, pure love, full perfection and fruition of all heavenly vertues, and unchangeable bleſſedneſs, whereunto Chriſt Jeſus is the door, he the Porter, (and not another) he *opens, and no man ſhuts; and ſhuts, and no man opens*; by him is the entrance, the going in and out, and finding paſture; for he is the paſture, even the living bread that came down from heaven, and is in heaven; the well of water ſpringing up to everlaſting life, of whom all the ſeveral ſects and ſorts of men (that climb up another way) are ignorant, and ſo (wanting the nourishment thereof) *fall ſhort of the glory of God*; and yet forward to reprove others, without any certain knowledge of thoſe things in themſelves, or conſidering with how much meekneſs, gentleneſs, love and privacie (for the moſt part) reproofs ought to be, even in weighty matters, and in all as thruſt on by divine love, and ſome hopes of thereby ſhewing the ſinner the evil of his way, that he may be reclaimed; ever weighing well how dangerous it is to abuſe and reprove others, and not live in the light ones ſelf; and how many tribulations and temptations others have born; to keep thee low in thine own eyes, and learn to know how to eſteem others highly in love for their work ſake: but

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ſight and knowledge of him, untill the reaſonable ſoul receive the kingdome of God (as Chriſt ſaid) and that full bleſſed and endleſs life in him. ——— And in order thereto, ever to feel and know how Jeſus Chriſt opens the inner eye of the ſoul, of his goodneſs and meer mercy, when and as he pleaſeth, by lighting the reaſon with his true inner light in the conſcience to ſee him, and know him by little and little, as the ſoul may ſuffer him; whereby he gently ſheweth the ſoul that he is an unchangeable being, of ſaving ſtrength, faithfulneſs, goodneſs, and bleſſedneſs of endleſs life, which the obedient ſoul learneth to ſee (as much more then can be well expreſs'd) as Jeſus pleaſeth to reveal to him by his holy Spirit, and that not blindly, nakedly, or unſavourily, as in mans own reaſon (by his outward learning or other bodily abilities) but with an underſtanding enlightned, comforted and ſtrengthened by the gift of the holy Ghoſt, with a wonderfull inexpreſſible love, reverence, godly fear, ſpirituall ſavour, and heavenly delight, ſo as that the affections become raviſhed therewith, and keeps from the minding of earthly things: And this is God pleaſed to beget his owne likeneſs in man, which begetting is his Son in fleſh, even that goodneſs, ſight, and ſure knowledge of God in Chriſt, and love unfained in him, which is a reforming of the ſoul in faith and feeling, and yet may not be grown ſo fully perfect in love, as ſome have felt and written of; but the more clean, clear and ſimple the ſoul is made in parting from fleſhly love, the more quick ſight and greater love to God it hath; and it may be ſo, as though there were no other man, that believed in, or loved Jeſus Chriſt, but that he were alone (as *Elijah* once thought) yet he would love him, truſt in him and follow him, and not part with him for all other things; and then a man valueth all earthly created things at one rate, as nothing worth in his eſteem, knowing that both the love and the things themſelves (that worldly men eſteem and delight in) ſhall periſh together, —— coveting nothing but cloſe communion with Jeſus Chriſt ſpiritually; not fleſhly, for he knows not after the fleſh, but loves and owns Jeſus Chriſt in all men, without reſpect to outward perſons and things, and flies from the vain ſights of worldly delights, that others take pleaſure in, his delight being onely in Jeſus Chriſt, leſt other things ſhould let the freedome of his heart from him; neither doth he value or heed the ſpeakings of other men, unleſs in the ſame light, love & meekneſs of Jeſus Chriſt; and would rather be ſtill in peace, having nothing outwardly; unleſs it be ſpoken feelingly and ſtirringly, as of the love of Jeſus to farther him therein. —— And as for ſpeaking or hearing of worldly ſpeech, it hath no ſavour in him, much leſs ſtories, tidings, or vain janglings, can have no place in his thoughts, and therefore not in his affections; for as the inner eye of the ſoul is opened through faith, walking by love into the beholding of Jeſus Chriſt by inſpiration of ſpeciall grace, it is thereby made clear, ſubtill, and able to

move to, and work in the Lords vineyard, in such manner of working by the holy Ghost, as the greatest learned men on earth cannot imagine, with all their wit and skill, much less shew it with their tongues; because it is not gotten by study, nor through any mans labour, but by pure and speciall gift of the holy Ghost; and is not different in quality from the heavenly gift in conversion of the chosen souls, but is the same, though it be otherwise felt and shadowed out to the soul.——

For as the soul groweth in grace, so grace groweth in the soul, and increaseth more and more unto the perfect day, and heavenly kingdom of especiall seeing into the secrets of the Lord Jesus; so that when the heart awaketh to God, and is knit to him, then it sleepeth, and is lost from the world: And thus the Apostles slept to the worldly love, while in true inspiration of the holy Ghost, contemplating on Jesus Christ, they were awake (though they had other sleeps, sometimes, as when Christ said, *Could you not watch with me one houre?*) having their souls inspired through grace, and the speciall eye therein opened, and beholding Jesus Christ in purity and poverty of spirit, inward silence, true rest, peace in conscience, highness of heavenly thoughts, with singleness and purity of heart, disliking the joyes of this world, and onely delighted with spirituall savour of bright burning love; thirsting for, and gently seeking the Lords blessed presence spiritually. These are true testimonies of the inspiration of the holy Ghost, in this keeping the spirituall eye of the soul; but seeing that reforming onely in faith, and fleshly feeling is very low and perilous in its beginning (because of the aptness then to yield to the tempter and backslide) and reforming in spirituall feeling and savour so high and sute, great diligence is requisite in watching, waiting, coveting, and labouring (as the Lord Jesus moveth) in disposing the affections, and bringing the heart to cleanness and feeling of grace, which is a constant work, of much travel of soul against all wicked stirrings and temptations; for it so falls out with some, that through negligence and yielding to tentations, the enemy enters the soul again; and then it feels not the grace as it did, but it is withdrawn, and the soul returns into the state as before; but then the soul is in much blindness, pain, sorrow and unsavourines; for it relisheth worldly things but unsavourily, and is encumbered with bodily wit and earthly matters for the time; and then it desireth after the grace of Christ Jesus again, and may not find it for a time: but this withdrawing is alwayes for just cause, and also in much mercy to prove the soul, and let it see that without Christ it can do nothing, and come to him again with much pain and labour, fear, care, and watchfulness; while it supposeth that Jesus Christ heareth not, which is his dealing with many, for their spirituall strength and growth in him; for then the Lord Jesus is sure that the soul will not turn again to worldly love, for that it can have no savour therein; and then after a time Jesus Christ resupplieth in-

to that ſoul full of grace and truth; viſiteth it in its deſires, ſighs and longings, for very love to his preſence; and then as he toucheth it ſoftly, and *anoynteth* it with the *oyle of gladneſs*, it is healed of all pains and pantings, and then it cryeth to Jeſus in the ſpirit, with a glad heart and ſweet ſtill voyce, as his love teacheth.

This opening of the ſpirituall eye of the ſoule, is a light darkneſſe, and rich poverty, leading to purity of ſpirit, quietneſs of conſcience, inward peace, and ſpirituall reſt, with high and heavenly thoughts, in ſingleneſs of ſoul, a light and feeling of grace in the ſecrets of the heart, —— taſting heavenly ſavour of inflamed love, with bright-ſhining light, of reforming into pure feeling, whereof many holy men of God have written every one according to his reſpective feeling thereof in the grace of the holy Ghoſt; and though they ſeem divers in ſhewing by words (becauſe then each one ſpake after his own then receiving and encreaſing in grace) yet nevertheleſs they agreed in all, as in one ſentence of unchangable verity; —— for the ſoul that (through the Lords mercifull viſiting with his grace) comes to ſee the face of Jeſus by that touching and eſpeciall grace of the holy Ghoſt, is changed and turned from what it was into another manner of living, for it is wonderfully drawn; firſt into it ſelf, from love and likings of all earthly things, inſomuch that it hath loſt the ſavour of the bodily life; and all things elſe, ſave onely Jeſus Chriſt; and is thereby made clean from all the filth of ſin, and all inordinate affections are wiped off, and waſhed away in the blood of the Lamb, and hath nothing ſtanding to hinder him (between God and his ſoul) but onely the bodily eye, which is thereby become blind, and the ſoul in ſpirituall reſt with Jeſus Chriſt, without fears, cares or deſires of worldly things, but fully imployed in a free and ſpiritual working, and love therein; whereby its reſt increaſeth to perfection; it being truly called reſt, becauſe grace hath wholly looſed the heavy yoak and bonds of fleſhly love, to work with eaſe in ſweet amity, joy and delight, as the holy Spirit directeth the ſoul and leadeth it: ——And this doth ſilence the ſoul from janglings of all other ſpeakers; —— for it is the voyce of Jeſus Chriſt in heavenly vertue, ſoftly ſounding in the clean ſoul by his quick and piercing word (sharply dividing between the joynts and marrow, and diſcerning the thoughts and intents of the heart) that ſlayeth all fleſhly love, and keepeth the ſoul quiet from all the ſtirrings thereof, and ſo is ſilence made in heaven for half an hour (as it is written) even within in the clean ſoul, that is lifted up by grace, from earthly love to heavenly converſation; and ſo it is in ſilence, though but for a ſhort time before it be again aſſaulted by its enemies; ——, yet hath it peace in conſcience, becauſe this grace puts out all gratings, prickings, ſtirrings and fightings of ſin, making Jeſus Chriſt and the ſoul both one in a-

greement of will and affections, ſo that there are no upbraidings of ſin, nor reprovings for faults, —— for the Son and that ſoul have kiſſed each other, and are become friends, and all faults paſt are forgiven, whereby the ſoul feeleth aſſurance of its ſalvation (by the witneſs of the holy Ghoſt in the heart) and thereby receiveth day by day more and more ſpirituall joy and boldneſs to come to the throne of grace, the holy Spirit bearing witneſs of its ſonſhip, and the witneſs in the conſcience adminiſtring ſure conſolation, with peace and pure accord, love and laſting friendſhip between Jeſus Chriſt and the ſoul, ſo that the ſoul is then above the world in high and heavenly contemplation, which is an earneſt of true glory here in the body, in the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, with ſo ſtrong and laſting deſires of love, that many waters cannot quench: —— And bleſſed is that ſoul which is ever fed in feeling of love in Jeſus Chriſts preſence, & is born up by deſire to him in his abſence; for he is wiſe and hath well learned Chriſt, that holdeth him ſadly and reverently with pure affections, while he is preſent; and while he is as abſent, beareth it patiently and eaſily, without bitter pains of impure deſires; —— and as there are diverſities of feelings in the preſence of grace, ſo there are in the abſence of grace, according to the ſouls meekneſs or growth therein; and therefore he that knoweth not the abſence of grace, is readily deceived by outward ſounds of other mens ſayings; —— and he that is not diligent and watchfull to keep the preſence of grace, is very unkind to Jeſus Chriſt, that in and for love giveth it; for the ſoul ſhould be like her head in vertue and firmneſs of perfect love. —— And this take for a maxime, that he who perceiveth no changes in feeling of his grace given him, but ſtill remains alike, all whole, ſtrong, ſtable, unbroken, or unhurt (as he thinketh) muſt needs be either full perfect, or full blind; but the latter is more like, or moſt to be feared; for he that is ſo perfect, that he is above all touches of earthly things, dwelleth in Jeſus Chriſt by ſweet and ſoft love, is accepted into a high eſtate of heavenly glory and reſtfull pleaſure, knowing nothing but pure love, which is God; — but he is full blind indeed, that feigneth himſelf to be in grace and favour with Jeſus Chriſt, without ſpirituall feeling of the holy Ghoſt, and ſetleth himſelf in a ſtay'd condition, as if he were ever in feeling & working in ſpirituall grace, thinking that all is grace that he feeleth, without and within, and that what he doeth and ſpeaketh is grace, and that he is unchangable therein, —— and alwayes at one ſtay and condition, which he eſteemeth good: —— Such a ſoul is fully blind, and altogether without feeling of grace in any its workings; for they are wrought as aforeſaid, and by a lively inſpiration thereof, with the ſpirituall preſence of Jeſus Chriſt in the ſoul, and ſweetneſs of his love, by his wonderfull in-dwelling there. This is the life of feeling in grace (after the meaſure of the gift) with a reverend beholding him ſpiritually, without which (in ſome meaſure) all is but deceitfull, and nothing

thing worth, nor any way of good use, but hurtfull: for as the ſoul is the light and life of the body, ſo is Jeſus Chriſt the light and life of the ſoul, by his gracious preſence, which cannot ſo well be expreſt as felt, for it is the light, life, love, joy, ſtrength and reſt of the ſoul that hath painfully felt it; yet with ſweetneſs, inſomuch that it cannot ceaſe from deſiring it: —— And this is, that no man may miſtake in or concerning the work of grace in his own ſoul; and he who will remain ſtill filthy, may bear his own burthen (whatever he be) and his ſhame alſo; for God hath not left himſelf without a witneſs in every man, neither is he wanting to any, though (as Chriſt ſaid) The holy Ghoſt inſpireth where and when he will, and that privily (as the wind bloweth) oft-times when men are leaſt aware of hint, but is known by his ſtirring and turning the heart into a beholding of his goodneſs, and melting it into ſoftneſs of love; & yet wonderethat his highneſs & ſhining brightneſs: but the ſubſtance & effect of this ſhining grace remaineth (though not in its fervour) while the ſoul is kept clean without fallings (by wilfulneſs or negligence) into a diſſolute life of fleſhlineſs and outward vanity; —— and alſo know, that the ſoul which is unacquainted with the touches of ſpirituall grace, is an enemy to all ſpirituall works, as being old, dry, rotten, barren, and without ſavour in it ſelf; for the ſalt hath there no ſavour, and to be trodden under foot, and nothing but the light of grace (through touching) maketh it lively, ſharp, quick, ſubtil, ready and able to ſpirituall work, by giving it great freedome, and a holy readineſs in will and affections to obey all the ſtirrings of grace in the ſoul, and to watch thereto for opening of the ſpirituall eye, whereby it becomes apt to meditation, watching and prayer, but not to pray in the common manner it did before, with loud voyce, many words, and other mens ſpeakings, but in ſtilneſs of the voyce, and tenderneſs of heart, & being gathered up into it ſelf, and in the ſpirituall preſence of Jeſus Chriſt, wherein every word and ſyllable hath a ſavoury ſweet ſound, and delectable melody in the heart by the holy Spirit; as being wholly entered into the fire of love, the powers of the ſoul being all heated and inflamed with love, ſo that the ſparks flie upward, whence the fire came; and therein is the ſoul ſo comfortably enlightned, that it knowes not how to leave off watching, praying, and praiſing God, with ſpirituall delight and heavenly joy, when no matter is ſeen outwardly, nor voyce heard; And this is the food and nouriſhment of the ſoul, and of much vertue againſt temptations and likings of the world; for it beareth up both ſoul and body from painfull heavineſs of heart, and feeling of the wretchedneſs of this earthly life, and the ſoul is thereby kept quick and lively: This was *Davids* prayer as Incenſe aſcending and perfuming the ſoul, and ſo as any hath a Pſalm of the ſpirit, which is ſavoury and ſoft, ſweet and pleaſant, in the pure mind, broken and burning heart, it giveth up a ſweet ſmell to the face of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: theſe

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the prayers and praises, heard and accepted of God, (as before hath been said) yielding and also receiving grace from him, which he accepts as an addition to his Glory; and all other praying wants savour and sweetness, as a speaking of words with the tongue, when the heart is gone after other lovers, or likings of fleshly things, and the soul is not master of the bodily wits, and imaginations of the brain, and is that wherein is no constant devotion, no freedom of spirit, no ardent and burning love and affections, nor whole mind; but much speaking and running about here and there by words (seeming to speak of spirituall matters) without savour, profit, or any soul-satisfaction, and therefore hear with me a few words more of this weighty business of Prayer, and keep first to silence and firm watchfulness, that thou mayst first come to a joyfull feeling of this spirituall praying, and that shall teach thee unchangable wisdome, without fancy or fainedness (that those are possessed with that speak well or ill of things they know not) and therefore abide therein, untill grace come into thy soul otherwise, and will remove it in part for a time, and employ thee otherwise; and then therein be obedient, for that is the best of all sacrifices, whereby the holy God will be served; and so there is no need of mans teaching how to pray or praise him, what words to speak, how to divide duties into parts, or to guide the affections; for the holy Spirit teacheth all this, and much more, as he pleaseth; and the soul feeleth it self led thereby to enjoy Jesus Christ in some measure: but this praying and praising God with the Spirit and understanding, the wise world accounts foolishness, and (being strangers to it) would have others continue so likewise. In this spirituall watchfulness is the Revelation of Jesus Christ, whereby the writings of the holy men of God are rightly shewed and opened, which mans wit, learning, reason, or study, cannot reach; for the understanding thereof is freely shewed to the clear soul by Jesus Christ, who is the well-spring of wisdome and knowledge; it is he that maketh the soul lively, and wise to understand the holy Scriptures, and yet not all at once in speciall view thereof, but grace giveth ability in spirituall manner, as it cometh into the pure mind: and this opening of the understanding is by the working of the holy Ghost in the presence of Jesus Christ, whereby the soul is enabled to expound the Scriptures one after another, be they never so hard or secret; and the harder they be, and the farther from mans reason and understanding, the more delightfull is the true shewing of them, whether it be Literal, as concerning the outward man; Moral, to inform of vertues to be followed, and vices to be eschewed; Mystical, to see the words and works of Jesus Christ spiritually; or Spirituall, as longing after him and his works, to do them in like love, and live in them as his friends (so said he) and this last truly understanding Scriptures savours well, and very sweetly in the Lords taste; for so the spirit of life giveth understanding of what was formerly by himself directed

ded, and from him written (and so of no private interpretation) quickning the thoughts of the soul therein with great sweetness, savor and delight, in special, sad, and serious waiting on Jesus Christ, to understand Scriptures in his will, and his testimonies of love therein, through divers inward discernings, sweet movings, and sudden touchings of the holy Ghost, whereby the soul is taught and enabled thereto, without other helps; and he that thus is given to understand the Scriptures, values not the knowledge of men, gotten by learning, arts and sciences, though of never so great worldly cunning and skill; for the end of the true knowledge thereof, taught by Jesus Christ, is, that the soul may see and enjoy him, and attain salvation to life eternall; and therein glorifie him, as God equall with the Father, &c. whereas the other way of knowledge is for self-ends, worldly vanities, and fleshly delights.

When the servants of Jesus Christ are well skill'd concerning their hearing the voyce of Christ, they truly hearken, know, and follow him; and then neither feignedness (by transformings, nor otherwise) can deceive them; for therein is no fainedness, fancy, pride, nor hypocrisie, but soundness, meekness, peace and charity, full of life, love and grace; so that when it soundeth in the soul, it so aboundeth with strength and vertue, that it causeth the soul to leave all to wait upon it, to listen, hearken, perceive, rest in, and love the sweet breathing of his spirituall voyce, according as he sheweth himself, whether as a Master, a Father, a Husband, &c. keeping the soul in a wonderfull reverence and lively beholding of him, with much liking and delight to the soul, that it may become a true and faithfull Spouse to him in the fulness of fellowship, and light of love:—— and this is in great power and glory, a state of perfection, in the way to as full communion with God, as *Adam* had in innocency, and *Enoch* by walking with him—— but the sight, strength and comforts of some are therein more then others, though all in this state are growing into the love and life of God in Christ Jesus, so as the eye of heaven is opened to all such clean souls, whereof holy men have diversly written, as they were moved by the holy Ghost, as of a life above all appearances, likenesses, bodily creatures, or things, even as in heaven beholding the Lord Jesus spiritually, and loving him faithfully, and therein knowing God the holy Ghost, as love uncreated, and the love formed in the affections of the soul, to be of and by him, through the sight and knowledge of the unchangable light and truth, which is of God placed and seated in all meek souls, wherein the Spirit of holiness resteth and pleasantly walketh;—— yet this formed love in the soul is not God himself, but the love which the soul feeleth in Jesus Christ, and to him; neither is this the cause of coming to Jesus Christ, but pure love, which is God him-

himself, is the true cause of this knowing and drawing to himself; for he sheweth and giveth of this love (which is the holy Ghost) to teach and lead them, so that God is both the giver and the gift, as Christ Jesus said, *I give my self*, &c. whereby mans soul comes to know this uncreated love, and to know and love Jesus Christ, as the free gift of God, whereby he toucheth the heart with the invisible light, to know him, and receive his love, and to love him again, as in and with the same love (so freely given and received) but all in his own time, by more quick or slow gracious feelings, imparted into such souls as are cloathed with the new light of righteousness and true holiness, which is a right reforming in the spiritual savour, love and meekness; but he is not so lighted and led by the holy Spirit, that thinks he can do any good thing of himself, or otherwise then by such working in him spiritually.

To you my dear friends, that are of the holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly vocation, I salute you in the pure light of unchangable and endless love in Christ Jesus our Lord, according to the spirit of holiness, and undubled liberty, wherewith he hath made us free, to serve him in spirit and truth; - - - - have you born the indignation of the Lord in your own particulars? - - are you purged from the pollutions of the world, cleansed from the filthiness of flesh and spirit, and thereby departed from the shadowes of this world, and received glorious garments of the Lord; put off the mortall and put on the immortall cloathing, and sweetly confessed, and meekly suffered for the name and testimony of our Lord Jesus, who is our life, and who of very faithfulness and pure love hath caused us to be troubled, and is near at hand to succour you and give you rest in him, purifie and prepare you for further trials, so your spirituall profit and advantage, in filling up the measure of his sufferings in your flesh, and overcoming by the blood of the Lamb, the word of his testimony, and not loving your lives unto the death, wherein the eternall God will be your refuge, and underneath his everlasting arm for your defence; and therefore all to be faithfull and diligent, that truth suffer not by any faint or feeble owning of it; for we are not called onely to believe, but to suffer also for him in whom we believe; and you be here dayly as pilgrims and strangers, that have freely parted with your owne wills, desires, fleshly affections, and worldly delights (that the eternall will of God may be done in you and by you) and now bear the Cross quietly and patiently, in clean vessels, as Temples of the living God, for his worship in the beauty of holiness; - - - and what have you here more that is worthy your minding, that may run take from you? or how may you withhold any other thing from our Lord, or his service, wherein you know that your loss of labour will not be in vain? And therefore gird up the loynes

loyns of your minds, ſtand faſt, quit you like men, and be ſtrong in the Lord, and the power of his might, that the fear of man, careful thoughts, or immoderate deſire, be not found in any of you; watch and pray, that you enter not into tentations, or give occaſion to the enemy of your ſouls, leſt there ſhould be ſtoath, guile, or diſſimulation hid in any heart, or a root of bitterneſs ſpringing up, to trouble and defile, or other unskillfull ſtirring by inordinate affections, in any ſoul after the bodily ſufferings; changes being ſeldome free from temptations, ſpecially in the weak, who are moſt apt to cenſure the ſtrong; he that hath the beams in his own eye, to pull at the moat that is in his brothers eye; while contrarily the ſtrong ſtrive not with the weakneſs in any, but ever to ſtrengthen the pure principle, & help it over the weakneſs, that you may appeare (as you are) the plant which the Lords right hand hath planted, ſo as that none can pluck you up, his portion and peculiar treaſure, his jewels, ſons of the free woman, that abide in the houſe for ever; a people whom the Lord loves, leads about, inſtructs in his way, and keeps from evil, and to whom is his bleſſing of peace and life for evermore; that are as living ſtones built up a ſpirituall houſe, as a city ſet on a hill, that cannot be hid, to ſhew forth his praiſe in the bleſſed love and brightneſs of his ſhining glory, and be a ſweet ſavour to him in them that believe, and in them that periſh in unbelief; by holding forth the faithfull word of his patience, and everlaſting Goſpel of mans ſalvation, &c. What manner of perſons ought you therefore to be in all holy converſation, that by the burning beams of his beautifull and holy preſence, you may put to ſilence the ignorance of fooliſh men, that blame your good converſation in Chriſt Jeſus, and the hearts of others (that tremble at the word of the Lord) be melted into tender love and heavenly ſweetneſs, ſuitable to receive that bleſſed Goſpel of peace and reconciliation, and ſo ſuck at the breaſts of conſolation, as to be daily delighted with the freſh ſprings of his love, thereby to flouriſh as an herb, and be prepared to enjoy the inheritance of the Saints in light;— and though the world know you not, and Satan (the enemy of your ſouls) would not have you known (leſt it ſhould be to his loſs) yet is the righteous God (greater in you then he that is in the world) haſting to clear up your innocency, that you may be well known to have no ſtrange god amongſt you, that you touch not the unclean thing, but are his ſons and daughters, having your habitation in the holy mountain, with the ſhout of a King amongſt you, and that his word ſpoken ſhall ſurely come to paſs, your enemies be found liars, and confeſs that they have dealt unworthily with you, for the Lord hath kindled a fire that ſhall proceed out of your mouthes to devoure the adverſary (which cannot be quenched) and they that hurt you muſt be ſo killed, and there is no project to prevent it; but as you are faithfull to our Lord, ſpirituall rights you ſhall have over the beaſt, over his image, over his mark, and over the

number of his name, and be found without spot before the throne of God and the Lamb; ——— and this is it that giveth you victory, even your firm faith; but you have need of patience, and that it have its perfect work in you, so that (having done the will of God) you may enjoy the promises in the new heaven and earth, the true voyce of God in spirituall glory, in the eternall freedome of will, and restitution of all things into the heavenly rest, wherein all doubts are resolved, union cleared, and expectations satisfied; and in the way every one is to take care there be no giving or taking offence, no falling out, no touching of any unclean thing, no hasty striving with the evil nature in any others (for that (as pitch) will defile) no giving place to evil, but overcome it with good (as our Lord commanded) and being ever apt to reach and bless, that you may be heirs of the blessing.

And to conclude, here is nakedly and barely set before all sorts of men the wayes and wages (as *Moses* sometimes said) of good and evil, life and death, for every man to chuse which he will; for so it pleaseth the Lord to deal with every man, and therein he doth man no wrong, by leaving him to his own will, and giving him a reward according to his own works, &c. and experience teacheth that every man will say, he loves God and Christ, and would be sorry else (while he acts as his enemie against him) and that he would have everlasting life, his soul saved by partaking of the joyes of heaven, and escaping the torments of hell; and therefore would *die the death of the righteous*, and have his *latter end like his*. ——— And so said *Balaam* when he was striving to curse the people of God, and gave wicked counsel to the King of *Moab* against them; and to such I say, Why walk you then in *Balaams* way for mens favours & rewards, & so act against the Lord his servants, and the light of him in your own consciences, for self-ends, and make such provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof? And why are you not now willing to live the life of the righteous, but have him in so great derision, and a proverb of reproach (as at this day) why do you account his life madness, and his end without honour? why erre you so from the truth, that the light of righteousness should not arise and shine in you, but rest your souls so in fleshly likings, and love of this world, whereby godliness seems nothing to you, but as a feoffull thing of nought, and wrath rests in your hearts, even against the Lord and his servants, though you say you love him; but know, that for all these things, the Lord God will bring you to judgement, & you shall see (as it is written) the righteous stand with great boldness, and his salvation seem strange to you, above all you looked for; and then (over-late) you may say within your selves, What hath pride profited us, or the pomp of riches (with our vanities) brought us? when the idol-gods you now serve shall depart as a shadow, or Post that passeth by, with

with the friendship of this world, whereby you are [illegible] for (as it is written) whosoever will be a friend to the world is the enemy of God, and afraid of him, seeks to take his heart from him, and inward fear possesseth him (as it did Adam) so that he flies, hates, loves darkness, keeps in it flies, hates, thunder, lightning, and fears departure from it; and though he force himself to make a kind of counterfeit worship for a time, yet therewith all he is [illegible] and feels a heavy weight and pain in his own bosom, from which he cannot flie, but it reproves him and condemns him at every turn; and as for the light that shineth in the dark place of his soul, he is afraid of that also, and saith or love find no room in his earthen vessel; for his own lusts fill up the place, and devour all, by conceit, imaginations, and vile affections, wherein he spends his time to feast himself, and yet get swelling words of vanity, touching things he never saw, and to have mens persons in admiration for advantage sake; which is a knowledge and condition that puffeth up the heart (but redeems not to God from the worldly glory and vain conversation) wherein some are so fettered that they will not be reclaimed, or endure to be soberly admonished to the contrary for the safety of their souls; from whence there is this one onely way, *Jesus Christ* (the pure path to be known spiritually) and the Father worshipped in him; ——— to which a very plain simple man (as the fishermen without humane learning) may easily attain, if he hinder not himself by his own willing, seeking, desiring, hearing, striving, or outward contention about it; because there is a pure principle in every mans conscience, which hath onely need to be awaked, stirred up, and quickned to behold and see all things, in the inner powers and parts of the soul, and so cease from all outward seekings for it, because it is there the free gift of God by his spirit, and such as no man can fully teach the knowledge of to another (though he were never so well acquainted with the Divine Mysteries) which if well considered by those that have attained to some small measure or degree of grace, they would not so run into words as many do, or be so conceited of their little grace received, as to lose it by vain-glory, while others that have much more, wait in still silence of their souls for the Lords work, to be therein accomplished, as these also would (oft-times when they speak) did they know how little grace or spiritual savour they have, in respect of what God giveth to others (that singly wait on him with holy and humble hearts) and may give also to them, if they likewise wait diligently for it. ——Ah that worldly and vain-minded men would, at last, consider and commune with their own hearts, to finde out their wayes, and see the sadness of their conditions, with the high concernments of their souls, and how the difference stands between the children of this world (that are wise in their generation) and the children of light, and how the latter exceed the former by many degrees of true wisdome from above, and heavenly joy, when no word is spoken, or

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